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Holderness and the Holdernessians

A FEW NOTES

ON THE

HISTORY, TOPOGRAPHY, DIALECT, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE DISTRICT.

By a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

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PREFACE.

The Wapentake of Holderness is, in some respects one of the most interesting districts in the whole grea county of Yorkshire—one might almost venture t say in the whole of northern England. It is fa surpassed, it is true, by many other districts i wealth, population, and general commercial an political importance; to the mere tourist or sight seer, again, Holderness is not particularly attrac tive; whilst there are parts far more noteworth from an historical point of view even. But ther are some points in connection with the distric which are well worthy of notice. In all matter agricultural, for instance, Holderness stands i the very front rank. The dialect, again, is i some respects unique, and seems likely to receiv considerable attention at the hands of philologist and students of archaic English. The isolate position of the district—away from all the grea roads of the north, and separated by wold or estuar from neighbouring districts—has favoured the sur vival of numberless old customs and superstition of bygone days. And further, Holderness is in teresting as having been certainly one of the first— if not, indeed, the very first—parts of Britain t

receive Teutonic settlers; whilst the part it must have played in the times of the Danish ravages and occupations must have been very important. Lastly, it is specially to be noted that this is the only part of England where Frisian place-names are found.

The present little volume consists, with some slight additions, of the series of papers entitled "Notes on Holderness," which appeared in the *Eastern Morning News* and the *Hull Express* during the months of September, October, and November, of the present year. It is hoped that it may not be unacceptable to some to see the Notes reproduced in a more available and permanent form.

These short sketches make no pretensions to completeness or exhaustiveness; they are simply, as the earlier title indicated, "Notes" on what seemed the prominent characteristics of the history, dialect, superstitions, customs, topography, character of the people, and what not. Each of these subjects in itself would, if at all fully treated, require a moderate-sized volume, whilst anything like an adequate account of Holdernessian "wit and humour" would fill a very large book indeed. It is hoped, however, that the salient points in each division of the subject have been seized and treated at sufficient length to make them intelligible.

I venture to take this opportunity of thankfully acknowledging the ready and very valuable help I have received in all matters, historical and topographical, from my friend Mr F. Ross, F.R.H.S. (formerly of Beverley), whose acquaintance with the local history of the East Riding is probably hardly surpassed.

Notes on Holderness.

(By a Native.)

The present writer remembers being, a year or two ago, one of the four occupants of a compartment in a night train between Bristol and the north. One of the others forming the quartet was a well-dressed, comfortable-looking man, with a profusion of rugs and wraps of various kinds—not forgetting a handsome braided smoking-cap—and with an apparently inexhaustible supply of newspapers. He was evidently a "commercial," and a favourable specimen of the race. After the usual period of chilliness which Britons so much affect when strangers meet strangers, we got into a cosy chat. Our business friend was a great talker, and, if the truth be told, just a trifle fond of performing on that favourite instrument, the trumpet. He knew every district in England, and had visited at least every market town in every district. With, it is to be feared, a wicked desire of "getting a rise out of him," the present writer asked his opinion of the district of Holderness, and what were the towns of that district he usually honoured

with a visit. Our friend was completely nonplussed at once, and at first took refuge in blustering and vague explanations. However, he, with great good humour, soon confessed his ignorance, and appealed for enlightenment to our two other travelling companions. Of these one, a clergyman, laughingly denied all knowledge of the whereabouts of the locality in question; the other, a Scotchman, apparently of the steward or superior head gardener class, thought he had heard the name, but really couldn't say where the place itself was.

Now, think of this, O, ye good folks of Holderness! Out of three respectable, fairly-educated Britons, drawn together by chance, not one knew where lay your home, although they passed within forty or fifty miles of its borders. Think of that, ye inhabitants, who are wont to boast, not without cause, of your splendid corn land, of your well-to-do farmers, of your clever farm labourers, of your general agricultural notoriety, of your "whopping" drains, and last, but not least, of your unrivalled housewives. Yet it is true that the ordinary Englishman of other countics never heard of your fertile corner; further, that thousands upon thousands of Yorkshiremen even have no clear idea in what part of their big county the district called Holderness is situated; nay, still further, that even many East-Riding people have but vague notions of the

extent and nature of your important wapentake. All Holderness people will agree that this is not as it should be.

I suppose that mixed as we are—I mean we Englishmen in general—in the matter of ancestry, there is one element we all allow to be the chief, one race we are all proud to be of, one family of European languages we all acknowledge as the chief parent of our own dear vulgar tongue—it is the Teutonic. We do not despise the ancient British, the Roman, the French elements in our blood, our language, our character; but it is to the Saxon we turn as the main ingredient in all three. Well, the Holderness man may certainly boast of being a Saxon of Saxons (using that word to designate the Teutonic race generally, not a particular tribe), both in descent and speech. Probably in but few parts England are the inhabitants so purely of Teutonic origin, that is, possess the original Teutonic stock attempt to show in another paper.

The spot where Julius Cæsar landed will always be interesting to us, and naturally so; and it is the same with the place where William the Norman first planted his foot when he came to conquer our little island. But show me where the first noble Teuton savage—if, indeed, he were noble or savage—leapt ashore; where, deep back in the dim ages gone by, he and his kin first began their long and glorious occupation of this England of

theirs and ours—show me this, I say, and I will consider that spot, that district, as one never to be forgotten. It may, perhaps, astonish some to be told that our unknown Holderness is probably the very place in question—that this, probably, is the British ground that first held settled members of the ancient Teutonic kindred. Yet, as I propose to attempt presently, it may not be impossible to offer evidence showing that such a theory is not altogether an impossible or even an improbable one.

But what are we to understand by the Holderness district? What is its position, and what are its limits? These questions may be regarded from two points of view—the natural, or geographical; and the conventional, or political. Reckoning by the natural features of the country, Holderness ought to be all that triangular tract bounded on its three sides by the North Sea, the Wolds, and the Humber respectively. But a very slight dip into blue-book and gazetteer will show us that it is of somewhat smaller dimensions. It is considered as a larger wapentake divided into three smaller ones, and containing about fifty parishes and 160,000 acres. In this case the apex of the triangle will be some miles to the south of Flamborough, whilst the base would reach only from Spurn to the mouth of the Hull, instead of to the southern end of the Yorkshire wolds. Of course, it is easy to find out the

number of acres under cultivation, the number of inhabitants in the district, the average annual poor-rates, or even the number of dog licenses taken out in the wapentake, as well as any number of other Registrar-General-like facts ; but I would rather at present think of Holderness in days gone by, of Holderness in its infancy, or, as we might put it, in its savage state.

One may here note, parenthetically, what old Camden (Britannia) says of the origin of the name. "From Hull," he says, "a large promontory shoots out into the sea, called by Ptolemy Ocellum, and by us at this day Holderness. A certain monk has called it Cava Deira—that is to say, the hollow country of the Deira, in the same sense that Caelo-Syria is so called, that is, the Hollow Syria. . . . . The true ancient writing of the name is Holdeirnesse, as much as to say, the promontory of Holdeire."

But it is to far earlier times than Camden's that one may look back in the history of "Holdeirnesse," viz., to the time when Deira was something more than an obscure name mentioned in historical books, or even to the times when the name Deira itself had scarcely come upon the scene. What was the state of the district at the time, say, of the Roman occupation? What was the condition of the land? Who were its inhabitants?

It is probable that a complete answer to these

questions would present a picture as different as well could be from that which we see to-day. But a complete answer is necessarily impossible. Our information is scanty, and a good deal must be surmised. It is, possible, however, by the help of the few facts we possess, and some little imagination, to understand something of what Holderness would be some couple of thousand years ago.

And first we should have been struck, doubtless, could we have seen it, by that which is said to have given Holderness its name, by its exceeding *hollowness*; and, had we endeavoured to travel much in the region, we should probably have scarcely known whether to go on foot, on horseback, or by boat, supposing the two latter modes of locomotion had been at our command. The whole country side, in fact, was in an uncomfortably unfinished state; as a friend of mine once rather irreverently said, it appeared "as if the work of dividing the water from the land, accomplished long before in the major portion of the globe, had in Holderness been left off halfway!" Be that as it may, it is certain, that the number of pools, lakes, meres, marshes, and what not, was inconveniently large. Most of these were connected somehow or other with the sea, and all along what we may call the coast (for want of a better name wherewith to express the broken, patchy strip of ground between the inland waters and the sea proper) was a regular chain

of lakes. This, numerous names of the present day abundantly show—as Skipsea, Hornsea, Burton Pidsea, Kelsey Hill, Withernsea, Kilnsea, where we must remember that the true termination is *ea* (or *ey*), and not, as might be supposed, *sea*. This "ea" is from the old Anglo-Saxon *ea* (or Norse *oe*), meaning an island or a tract of land more or less water-begirt, so as to be at any rate a quasi-island. Of these lakes but one is left, Hornsea Mere (or Mar, as it is locally and more reasonably called), so well-known to Hull school children. Some of the lakes or pools were further inland. Let anyone stand on a fine day on the highest bit of ground he can find at Kelsey Hill, between the Burstwick and Keyingham stations, and look around. He will be aware that he is standing on part of the edge of a great shallow saucer, in which saucer are situated all the parish of Ottringham, nearly all that of Halsham, with parts of Keyingham, and perhaps part of Winestead. All this low-lying land was doubtless occupied formerly by a lake, or at any rate it was a fearful swamp liable to be flooded from the sea. Similar hollows may be seen almost all over Holderness. Further inland still there was the little river Hull, even more sluggish than now, making its way to the great Humber, and beyond the Hull came the line of Wolds, then covered with dense and almost impenetrable forest.

As for the inhabitants, whoever they were, they must have had a singular mixture of blessings and drawbacks. One can imagine a lusty young fellow of the period punting about the interminable swamps, and coming to the conclusion that the world was, on the whole, somewhat abundantly supplied with moisture. For it is to be noted that he had probably never been out of his own triangular corner of what we now call Yorkshire. To the east he had the great sea, across which, he had doubtless been told, his ancestors came in days long gone by; to the south he had the Humber, almost equally formidable as the sea itself to his small, rude craft; while to the west he had the impassable barrier of the Wold forests. But these impassable forests, though they somewhat circumscribed his knowledge of this island, were in reality his greatest blessing. For beyond those hills and those forests lived races fierce and warlike, who were at deadly enmity with his own people, and who would, but for that barrier, have given him but little peace. As it was, the folks of the Holderness of other days lived in comparative security behind their natural protection, the Wold woods, and carried on their little affairs of living and dying, of marrying and giving in marriage, of fishing, and, perhaps, rudely cultivating any dry land they were lucky enough to possess, without much other let or hindrance than that caused by their own waterlogged regions.

Notes on Early History.—Part I.

If any of my readers had the great good fortune to be present at the three lectures on the "Origin of the English Nation," delivered in Hull, in January, 1807, by the learned historian, Mr Freeman, and can carry back their memories to the subject matter, they will remember what stress he lays on the fact that we are essentially of Teutonic origin; how he insists on our being Englishmen, *i.e.*, of the Anglian stock, where the word Anglian stands for the Low German stock in general, and not one tribe of it in particular—and not Welshmen or Frenchmen; how he glories in our being in blood in language, in character Saxon. It is true, as Mr Freeman so eloquently put it, that we contain a certain admixture of other elements—Celtic, Romance, or what not—but we are not of more mixed origin than other nations. There is no such thing he showed as a perfectly pure descent, and we English are to all intents and purposes Teutons of as pure a type as can probably be found in most places at the present day.

If England, as a whole, is proud of being Teutonic, the people of Holderness have particular cause to be proud, for, as their district was probably one of the very first to be occupied by Low German settlers, so there can be no doubt that the inhabitants are still amongst the most Teutonic of Teutons.

Of late years the study of the names of places has almost developed into a distinct branch of philology, and the light thrown by it upon past events which written history has failed to commemorate, "of emigrations and immigrations, the commingling of races by war and conquest, or by the peaceful processes of commerce," is very great. Consequently, although Holderness possesses hardly any early *written* history, yet we are able, by means of a study of its place-names, to put together something like a connected account of its early history, especially when we make use also of what small amount of written record there is. I must mention that most of what follows is drawn from "Words and Places," a most learned and fascinating book, by the Rev I. Taylor, of Etruscan Researches fame.

Mr Taylor states that there are "several concurrent indications that the district of Holderness was occupied by Teutonic settlers before the close of the Roman rule"—in fact, before A.D. 287; a rather startling proposition, perhaps, to those of us who have been accustomed to regard the *fifth* century as

the one which witnessed the first Saxon settlement in Britain.

To begin with the name of the district itself. In spite of Camden's derivation, Mr Taylor says "the name Holderness means a wooded promontory. The Wolds are the 'woods,' and he compares with the German *world*. Again, Ptolemy, who wrote in the second century, gives us two names in connection with this district, viz., Petuaria, the name of a town, and probably Beverley, and Gabranto-vicorum Sinus, either Filey or Bridlington Bay. Now, both these words undoubtedly contain Teutonic roots, *Petuaria* having the German root *waere*, inhabitants whilst the second name contains the root *vic*, which was "the appellation of a bay in the language of the *Vikings* or *Baymen*, who, at a later period, descended in such numbers from the Frisian region." All this points to the undoubted fact that, even thus early, there were some Low German settlements in Holderness. But there were many tribes in the great Low German family, as the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Frisians, and so forth. Now, which of these tribes was it which so early occupied our district of Holderness? The answer is clear and unmistakeable. They were Frisians, a tribe from the district between the modern Zuyder Zee and the mouth of the Elbe.

Ptolemy mentions (besides the two names given above) a tribe which he calls the *Parisoi*, or Parisi,

as dwelling in the district we now call Holderness. It has been usually supposed that these Parisi were a Celtic tribe, the same which in another region founded Paris. But it is a well-known fact that the letters *p* and *b* in the Greek-Latin tongues become *f* or *v* in the Teutonic (as Latin and Greek *p*ater, English *f*ather, and numberless other instances). So that the Parisi may be identified with the *Frisii* or *Frisians*. Nor is this all. The theory that the Parisi were the Frisii becomes almost absolutely certain when we begin to examine the village names of Holderness, for Holderness is the only district in England where Frisian forms occur. Doubtless every person has noticed the common termination *ham* to so many of our English place names. Now the Frisian form of this *ham* is *um* (or *am*, *om*, &c.). In Holderness we have many villages with one form or other of this Frisian termination, as "Arg*am*, Newsom, Holl*ym*, Arr*am*, Rysom-Garth, and Ulr*ome*," to which may be added Angr*am*, Carl*am* Hill, Arr*am* Hall (not the same Arram as the one just mentioned above). We shall look in vain elsewhere in England for such endings. "Owstwick, too, is a Frisian form; the village of Frismersk is now washed away."

Thus there is no doubt whatever of the fact that our district was very early settled by Teutonic people, and, further, that the particular branch of Teutons was the Frisian. Concerning these Frisians

I cannot do better than quote Mr Freeman's words from the lectures already mentioned. "But near as the whole of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is to us in blood and speech, there is one corner of it which is even nearer to us than the rest—I mean the province of Friesland. Of all our Continental kinsfolk, the Frisians—the people scattered along the coasts and islands from Holland up to Holstein and Sleswick—are the nearest kinsfolk of all. Their tongue is still nearer to ours than the other forms of the Low-Dutch. In short, it might not be too much to say that they are Englishmen who stayed at home and did not cross into Britain. . . . . These Frisians, our nearest kinsmen, were always a free and bold people, and they kept on longer than any other people in Northern Germany the old free Teutonic constitution, with its popular assemblies, such as now go on only in some of the oldest and smallest of the Swiss cantons."

Such, then, were the inhabitants of Holderness during the latter half of the Roman rule, and they seem, on the whole, to have been on friendly terms with the Imperial people. It is certain that Holderness, even thus early, boasted some thriving towns, of which we have recorded Pretorium and Petuaria. The former was, in all probability, Patrington; whilst for the honour of having been the latter, many places—Beverley, Bridlington, Aldborough, &c.—have contended, but it seems to be conceded

that Beverley has the best right to the distinction. There was probably a seaport at the end of the Spurn Peninsula (the Ocellum Promontorium of Ptolemy), on or near the site where, long afterwards, flourished Ravenspur. There was a road from the neighbourhood of Pretorium to Eboracum (or York, then the capital of the country, and the residence or burial place of more than one great Roman Emperor), called the *via vicinalis*, and along this road much British corn was carried for shipment at Pretorium or Spurn for Imperial Rome. Thus, although Holderness lay out of the track of the great north road from London to York, it was not so altogether secluded from the outside world as it became in later days.

But the Romans vanished from the scene, and left hardly a trace behind them in Holderness, either in language or place name, building or earthwork. From this time there is a great gap in our knowledge of the district till the times of the Norman Kings. We may be sure, however, that Holderness had its share of troubles, of incursions, Danish or Norwegian.

We have but little written account of the history of Holderness during the interval between the departure of the Roman and the advent of the Norman, but it must not be supposed that we are altogether without information respecting what passed during those eight centuries. On the

contrary, Holderness saw many very stirring scenes during that period, and Saxon and Dane landed, ravaged, conquered, and settled in the district. The former came in crowds, and at least two great Saxon leaders landed in or near Holderness. First came Ida, the "Flame-bearer," who landed at Flamborough, and conquered almost the whole of the north of England, or, more properly speaking, Britain, including Holderness. From this "Flame-bearer" Flamborough is said to have got its name, but there are not wanting those who have considerable doubts on this head. However that may be, Ida was not long allowed to possess his kingdom of Northumbria in peace, for we find Ælla sailing up the Humber and taking a part of the kingdom from his relative—for Ida and Ælla were kinsmen. Thus there were two Northumbrias, which received the names of Bernicia and Deira. It was chiefly Angles from the district of Sleswig who peopled the newly acquired possessions of Ida and Ælla. If the Parisi—as it has been stated in a previous paper is the opinion of some—really were Celts, they must have been utterly driven out or exterminated, as they have left behind them hardly a trace of their language, either in the place-names or the dialect of the district. Indeed, there is hardly a more thoroughly Saxon district in England than Holderness. But there can be no doubt that the Parisi were not Celts at all, but Frisians,

hence of the same blood and language as Ida and his followers. There was a Saxon fort at Aldborough, which fort, it is believed, stood on the site of a previous Roman one.

Later on came the fierce Danes, and to such an extent did they land in Holderness that the port of disembarkation became known as Ravenspurn, or Ravenspur, from the national emblem, the Black Raven, of the redoubtable Vikings. The effect of this Danish occupation is very perceptible in the language of the Holderness peasant of to-day. The village names, too, are largely of Danish and Norwegian origin, as will be attempted to be shown hereafter.

Lucky was Holderness that it had Beverley between it and the rest of the north country. Every reader of English history knows the terrible punishment inflicted by William the Norman on the inhabitants of Yorkshire, who had revolted in favour of Edgar Atheling, of the old Saxon stock. Sixty miles were ordered to be laid waste of the land between the Humber and the Tees, and there is no doubt that Holderness would have shared the fate of the rest but for the lucky interposition of St. John, of Beverley. A number of troops—so the story runs—were told off by William to plunder the monastery, which for four centuries had been the pride of Beverley and the especial sanctuary of St. John. Just as the officer of the troop "entered

the building, he was stricken dead by the saint for his sacrilegious presumption!" William, who is known to have been very superstitious, was frightened when he heard what had happened, and immediately gave orders that Beverley should be left untouched. Thus the tide of destruction rolled on past Beverley northwards, and Holderness was saved.

Yet it is doubtful whether Holderness could have been very materially injured, even had St. John been unable to ensure its safety, the district being in all probability but a sorry property. Most of the land was either barren or waterlogged, and the towns and villages were few and small. However, Holderness was important enough to become a barony, and a rather notable one too. This barony, with all seigniorial rights and powers, was handed over by the Conqueror to Drogo de Bruere, who thus became its seigneur or lord-paramount. De Bruere was a Fleming who had married William's niece. Notwithstanding its being elevated into a barony, Holderness attracted but few Norman settlers, and no wonder, as the land was so infertile that we read of one early baron who petitioned for other and better lands. His domain he said would grow nothing but oats! Compare this with the Holderness of our days.

Time and space would fail to tell of the various hands through which the seigniory has passed.

Suffice it to say that it has been held by many very important personages—the De la Poles, the Aumerles, the Staffords, Thomas of Woodstock, Piers Gaveston, Anne of Luxembourg, may all be reckoned, as well as the Dukes of Buckingham, the D'Arcys, and, in our times, the Clifford-Constables. Of the De la Poles, however, a word may be said. They were originally merchants of Ravenspurn, which in the time of the Plantagenets had become a seaport of very considerable note. In fact, Ravenspurn was a borough, and sent its two members to Parliament in the reigns of the first and third Edwards. The Rapenspurn merchants subsequently moved to Hull. How the De la Poles rose to be Dukes of Suffolk, and the influence they had on their own times, are matters inseparably connected with the history of this country. The Barons de Ros originally took their title from Ros or Roos.

Two events of the first importance, and both sufficient to alter the whole course of English history, were witnessed by Holderness. The first of these happened in the reign of the weak but unfortunate Richard II. In 1399 there landed at the usual Holderness port, Ravenspurn, the young Duke of Lancaster, with the intention of wresting the sceptre, if possible, from the hands of his kinsman, Richard. How much Henry relied on the countenance and support of the good folks of Holder-

ness and the whole north country is shown by the fact that he brought with him but sixty persons, amongst them being the Archbishop of Canterbury and his nephew, the Earl of Arundel. Two powerful northern lords, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, were ready to join him, and it would seem that men rapidly flocked to his standard, for we soon find him in possession of an army of 60,000, and with this army he succeeded in placing himself on the throne as King Henry the Fourth. A broken stone cross, now in a field called the "Crawshaw," at Keyingham, is believed to have been set up at Ravenspur, in memory of Henry's landing, the cross having been removed to Keyingham from the old seaport.

A second famous landing took place on the same spot, some seventy years later, during that fearful civil war which lasted for thirty years, and spilt nearly all the best blood of England. It was after the reverses of the York party, and during the temporary triumph of Margaret, that Edward of York returned from Flanders, whither he had been compelled to flee. After having been prevented from landing on the Norfolk coast, in 1471 Edward came a little further northward, and found Ravenspur ready to receive him, as it had been ready to receive the head of the opposite party nearly three-quarters of a century before. Commencing his journey to York, almost every mile saw additions

to his force, and on his arrival at the city he was admitted. Being soon in a position to face the Lancastrian army, he marched southwards, where, as is well known, the great battle of Barnet placed the Yorkists in the ascendant and Edward on the throne, of which death alone deprived him.

Like the rest of England, Holderness was not neglected by the monks, who founded abbeys at Meaux and Swine. The former—of which hardly any traces remain—received its name from Meaux, in Normandy, whence came its founders. In these old monasteries, doubtless, the good old monks prayed, dispensed hospitality, illuminated manuscripts, and, perhaps, slily indulged in the good things of the larder and cellar. Many a quart of good old sack, too, was probably drunk at the priories of Nunkeeling and Burstall. Holderness boasted two castles likewise, one at Skipsea and one at Burstwick, and there are numerous traditions still afloat amongst Holderness folk of Royal visits to these castles.

Ravenspurn at length disappears from the scene, and the towns of Hedon and Hull are found springing into importance. Both became well-known seaports. They had, indeed, been known as ports before the destruction of the rival town at Spurn, but the palmiest days of Hedon, at least, were doubtless after that event. It is believed that Hedon then possessed no fewer than seven churches, which, if

true, proves it to have been a very flourishing town indeed, since we do not find that even the great mediæval town of Stamford ever possessed more. However, the sites of but two of the seven are now known, whilst but one of the churches is actually existing, and a fine building it is. Hedon continued to send two members to Parliament till the Reform Bill of 1832. As for Hull, which hardly belongs to Holderness proper, we know that it has been growing in importance ever since the days of the first Edward, and that whilst Hedon has utterly decayed, Hull has become the third seaport in England. "*Tempora mutantur*," those two towns might, indeed, say, "*et nos mutamur ab illis!*"

In the seventh century there appeared in the Humber, some two miles from the shore, the island which became known as Sunk Island. At first it was but 800 acres in extent, and, it is said, was for a long time let for £8 per annum, and was used simply as a feeding ground for goats and donkeys, which had to be conveyed to and fro in boats. Such, however, is the power and extent of the "warping" processes carried on hereabouts that the "island" is now hardly an island at all, being separated from the main land by only a narrow channel or "drain." It now contains at least 7,000 acres, and is said to bring in a rental to the Government of not far short of £20,000 a year.

The church dates from the first year of the present century.

The coast line of Holderness is receding in many places with great rapidity. Within living memory two churches have disappeared, viz., one of the "Sister Kirk's" of Owthorne, and the old church at Kilnsea. The font of this latter is preserved in the "Crawshaw" (at Keyingham) before mentioned. As a set-off against this, we have the great additions of land made on the Humber side.

The Holderness of our time contains no large towns and remains, as formerly, out of the track of the great lines of communication between north and south. It is, however, one of the most enlightened and thriving agricultural districts in the kingdom, and contains a large number of important villages. Every year the district attracts more and more people to its newly sprung up watering-places of Bridlington, Withernsea, and Hornsea. The ubiquitous railway "navvy," too, has been busy in Holderness, and the national schoolmaster is to be found in every village. What Holderness will become eventually no man can say; at present it remains one of the best wheat-growing districts in this country, and possesses a race of agriculturists of which no district need be ashamed. Patrington, Aldborough, and Hedon have had their day, whilst, possibly, Hornsea and Withernsea may have theirs still to come.

The present lord-paramount of the seigniory is Sir Frederick Augustus Talbot Clifford Constable, third baronet, of Burton Constable.

THE NAMES OF PLACES.

"Local names," says the Rev. T. Taylor, in his learned "Words and Places," before alluded to, "whether they belong to provinces, cities, or villages, or are the designations of rivers and mountains, are never mere arbitrary sounds, devoid of meaning. They may always be regarded as records of the past, inviting and rewarding a careful historical interpretation." And there is no doubt all this is true; names always mean *something*, and it is for us to find out what it is. The names of the towns and villages, of the hills and streams of any given district, tell a great deal of the history of that district, of the different races which have at different times peopled it—of "emigrations, immigrations—the commingling of races by war and conquest, or by the peaceful processes of commerce." And it often happens that what we do not know by means of written history, a study of local names will tell us, whilst things we do know something of from written records are often certified, explained, illustrated, or more fully developed by the same means.

Thanks to the researches of Zeuss, Pott, Worsaae, &c., amongst the Germans, and of Kemble, Guest, Edmunds, and, above all, Taylor, in our own country, the investigation of place-names has almost grown up into a distinct branch of study, or, at any rate, of philological study. And there are few parts of England which can furnish more interesting matter for such investigation than Holderness. Let us suppose a venerable old church, of which the greater portion by far is good Saxon work, with very considerable Danish or Norwegian additions, and a very few stones of Norman inserted later on. Let us suppose, further, that on the same site as our old Saxon church there had been a previous Roman building, and before that a Celtic one, and that the Saxon builders of the church had made use of two or three of the Celtic stones, but had almost altogether rejected the Roman ones they found on the spot. Now this church would fairly resemble the Holderness place nomenclature as a body. By far the greater part of the names are Saxon, a considerable number are Danish or Norse, a very few, indeed, are Celtic or Norman, whilst hardly any at all are Roman.

We know from history that Holderness has been inhabited by Celts, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, one after another, and we know from a study of the names of places that the Frisians were the Saxon tribe who first colonised the district. Of these Frisians there will be a few words to be said

later on ; at present a rapid glance at the names left by each nation may not be amiss. Beginning as far back as possible, viz., with the Celts, we find that they have left us but few, indeed, of their names. We may mention Eske, which may come from a Celtic word meaning water (from which also we get *whiskey*), the place being near the river Hull. Under various forms like Esk, Wsk, Ouse, Wash, viz., this Celtic word for water occurs, as every one knows, most plentifully in many districts. We have also Leven—probably from the Welsh word *llevn*—smooth ; or from a similar word *llin*—a pool. Roos or Ros, is said to be from the word *ros*, a projecting rock or headland, and the same word is found in Roslin, Rossall, and many more places in other parts of the kingdom. Very few more names of Celtic origin will be found in Holderness, and the plain inference is that the old Celtic inhabitants were either almost entirely exterminated or driven out by later comers.

Passing to the Romans, we shall find hardly a single place which still retains a Roman name. In fact, a rather close search on the ordnance map has failed to produce even one. Boreas Hill has evidently been so named by some later genius. It is evident that the Romans settled but little in the district, making it merely a landing place and a road to their capital, Eboracum or York, and to the rest of nothern Britain.

We come next to, perhaps, the most interesting

place names of all, those of Frisian origin. As has been already intimated, Holderness is the only part of England where the Frisian place-name ending *am* (or um, om, ym, &c.) occurs. Now this *am* is the shortened form of the well-known *ham* in names of places, and is a distinctly Frisian termination. We have Arram, Arram Hill, Angram, Carlam, Newsom, Rysom, Ulrome, Hollym, and possibly others. Owstwick, too, "is a purely Frisian form," and Frismerste is now washed away. All these names have doubtless been in use ever since the Frisian occupation during the latter part of the Roman rule in Britain.

But the great colonisation was that of the Angles, later on, and consequently the great bulk of the names are Saxon. Now, the chief endings of Saxon names of places are *ton*, *ing*, *ham*, *ley*, *borough*, &c. Taking England as a whole the termination *ing* is more common than any other, but in Holderness the ending *ton* is by far the commonest of all. A glance at the map suffices to bring out a list like the following, and many more might be added :—Barmston, Bilton, Carlton, Camerton, Coniston, Dunnington, Easington, Flinton, Foston, Garton, Grimston, Hilston, Holmpton, Humbleton, Mappleton, Marton, Newton (East and West), Patrington, Riston, Rowlston, Seaton, Sutton, Skirlington, Tickton, Upton, Weeton, Wyton. This word *ton* originally meant an enclosure. *Ham*, originally meaning *home* (German *heim*), occurs in Brigham, Fosham, Frodingham,

Figham, Halsham, Keyingham, Ottringham, &c. The form *ing*, which meant *the son of* (as Anglo-Saxon *Inguing*, the son of Ingwy), is found in Fitling, Gembling, Nunkeeling, Skeckling, Skeffling, as well as in many of the places mentioned under *ham* and *ton*. *Ley*, a clearing in a forest (compare our word lea) has two or three representatives in Lelley, Sinley, Sproatley, &c. *Borough*, a fortified place, is found in Aldborough, Ringborough, and possibly one or two more. We have also one or two places in *stead* (a standing place or station), as Ganstead, Winestead.

The Danish and Norwegian names in Holderness are very numerous, the chief tests for these words being the ending *ea* (or *ey*), *wick*, *thorpe*, *holm*, *by*, *ford*, *well*. The first, *ea* or *ey*, always indicates either an *island* or land so much bounded by water as to be, to all intents and purposes, an island, and it is to be noted that it is nearly always an island in the *sea*, or a *tidal river*. The great number of these terminations in Holderness shows how much the district must formerly have been cut up by the sea and the Humber. We have Skipsea, Rotsea, Hornsea, Withernsea, Kilnsea, Burton Pidsea, Kelsey Hill, Woodmansey, Thorney Croft, Stepney, &c. Another common ending is *wick*, a word nearly always meaning a *bay*—the old *Vikings* were simply *Baymen*. It is to be met with in Atwick, Bonwick, Baswick, Bewick, Catwick, Elstronwick, Burstwick, Owstwick, Withernwick,

and Welwick, and possibly others. Another indication of the condition of the land in times gone by—*Holm*, an *island* (in a river or lake, generally), is observed in Bewholme, Hempholme, Hayholme, Waxholme, Enholme, Benningholme, &c. *Well*, which may mean either a *watering-place* or simply an *abode*, we have in Dunswell and Rimswell. *Thorpe*, a *village* (compare German *dorf*) is represented by Danthorpe, Dowthorpe, Fraisthope, Langthorpe, Lowthorpe. Of *fords* we have Beeford and Wansford. It is very curious to observe that the commonest Danish ending of all, viz., *by* (meaning a village or settlement), occurs only about once in Holderness—in Ellerby—though just outside we have several others, as Anlaby, Tranby, Ferriby, Willerby, Skidby, Wauldby, Risby, &c. When we look over the Humber and see the enormous number of names in Lincolnshire with this ending, it seems odd that Holderness should have so few.

There remain the Norman or Norman-French names, which are few indeed, being limited to Meaux, Sand-le-Mere, Bidgmont, Preston, Magdalen Hill, and possibly one or two others.

But besides this grouping of names according to the *peoples* who have given them, it is instructive to look at the village and town names and those of natural features from a different point of view. Probably nothing is more striking in Holderness place-names than the frequent occurrence of words or endings indicating the presence of *water*. As

has been observed above, *ea* and *wick* show the presence of sea water, and the numerous instances of these forms tell us unmistakeably what we might have seen some thousand years ago. *Holme*, *well*, *ford*, too, occur frequently, and are all indicative of the presence of water. Then, again, we have such names as Sand-le-Mere, Hornsea Mere, Marton, Marfleet, where *mar* or *mere* is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning a *lake* or *marsh*. The word *marsh* itself, too, occurs very frequently, as Ottringham Marsh, Keyingham Marsh. *Carrs* (or cars) are very common in Holderness. They are low-lying lands liable to be flooded, either by the sea or other means. Roos Carrs, Hollym Carrs, are instances. Then we have isolated forms, like Catfoss (foss is from the Icelandic, and means a waterfall), Foston, Fosham; Lambwath (*wath*, a ford over a stream).

Moor or *waste land* must have formerly been very common, as numerous names attest, like Gransmoor, Moor Grange, Moor Town, Sandle Mere, Sandfield, Great Wassand, &c. Much the same thing is indicated by the frequent occurrence of the word *thorn*, which plant seems to have thriven tremendously in old Holderness, and it is easy to find numbers of names containing the word—Highthorne, Sigglesthorne, Owthorne, Thorngumbald (often called Gumberthorne), Withernsea (meaning White-thorn-island, Withernwick (White-thorn-bay), Hornsea (Thorn-island), anciently writ-

ten Thornsea. (This last word, however, it is but right to mention is, by Mr Taylor, said to mean *hare*-island, having been formerly spelt Hareney, but I cannot find any instance myself of such a spelling.) There is, besides, Thorneycroft (Thorn-island-field).

Hardly anything is more amusing than to see the frequency with which the word *hill* occurs in Holderness, which, of course, is wholly without hills, or, at any rate, hills that are perceptible to any ordinary stranger. The names have probably been given on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, or from a common human failing of pretending to have what we have not, and to be what we are not. At any rate we find Goxhill, Burshill, Nuthill, Skirlington Hill, Noddle Hill, Carlam Hill, Magdalen Hill, Hayholme Hill, Linley Hill, Struncheon Hill, Barfhill, Pag hill (now spelt Paull), Kelsey Hill, Ryhill, and innumerable others, besides such names as Ridgmount, which contains a double intimation of rising ground, Brandsburton Barf (*barf* means a steep ascent), and so forth. Even the levellest village of all level Holderness may have its two or three hills, as in the case of Ottringham, which can boast of its Peasebury Hill, its Applegarth Hill, and so on.

Some of the Holderness names contain an allusion to the old heathen worship of our ancestors. Thus we have Wansford, which means, undoubtedly,

Woden's ford, being so named in honour of one of the greatest of the ancient Saxon gods, from whose name also we derive Wednesday. Again, Fraisthorpe is possibly Frea's thorpe, from the goddess Frea, whose name occurs in Friday. If so, Fraisthorpe is one of the very few places in England (eight in all) named in honour of this goddess. Another explanation, however, is preferred by some, viz., that *Frais*thorpe is a *Frisian* settlement.

But few names in Holderness have given titles to any noble families; still, we have the Earls of Holderness, who took their title from the name of the whole wapentake, and the Barons de Ros, whose title came originally from Roos, as has been mentioned before.

NOTES ON THE DIALECT.

"If you look upon the language spoken in the Saxon times, and the English now spoken, you will find the difference to be just as if a man had had a cloak, which he wore in Queen Elizabeth's day, and since has put in here a piece of red, and there a piece of blue; here a piece of green, and there a piece of orange tawny. We borrow words from the French, Italian, and Latin, as every pedant chooses. The Holderness peasant still retains his strong, useful garment in all its original simplicity, without the aid of any adventitious frippery. Separated by lack of education, as much as by geographical remoteness, he has retained words and phrases which have elsewhere become obsolete, and others substituted, which frequently possess neither the force nor vigour nor picturesqueness of the old English of the province, the words of which are laughed at as vulgarisms."

So wrote "learned" old Selden, some 200 years ago, and his words apply now-a-days with almost as much force as ever. The Holderness peasant still

retains his "strong, useful garment" of good Saxon, and will probably long continue to do so, in spite of railways, visitors, national schools, and such like enemies to provincial peculiarities, though no doubt, of course, these will tend to introduce standard or "proper" English, at the expense of the genuine old dialect.

Many of us, too, I am afraid, are still inclined to laugh at the old words in use in provincial districts. and nobody gets more laughed at than the unfortunate Holderness man, whose dialect is considered the *ne plus ultra* of "broadness" and uncouthness. But are we justified in thus laughing at the speech of the peasant of East Yorkshire? Is it true that his peculiarities of pronounciation, of grammar, of vocabulary are simply "vulgar," "improper," "bad" English? Not a bit of it; it is very pure, proper, and good English of its kind, its only fault—if it be a fault, which is very questionable, indeed—being that it is not like book or educated English of the present day. The fact is that provincial English is, for the most part, only old English, and that, whilst literary English was continually changed, and is still changing, local dialects have stood still, or nearly so. Our modern standard English is not the same as was the standard English of times gone by. Everybody knows that *tea* used to be pronounced *tay*, and *oblige obleege*, and so on, not so long ago. But the language of the Holderness rustic has probably

changed very little indeed, that is in comparison with standard English.

It cannot, then, be too clearly understood that if we go back far enough we shall find that the curious words and pronounciation of modern Holderness were once used *in ordinary conversation by educated men*, and that further they were even to be found *in books*. A few examples may not be altogether out of place. Probably one word most laughed at is "knaw" for know. Yet *knaw* is the correct old English form, whilst know is merely a bit of modern refinement. Look at the "Cursor Mundi," a famous poem of the 14th century. We find (line 46)—

"Men schoal him *knaw* for good or ill."

And again (line 226)—

"To *knaw* himself how he began."

Again, how we are inclined to smile at such expressions as "Jack hat," "my faythers stick," for "Jack's hat," "my father's stick," &c. Yet the same "Cursor Mundi" gives us "Com for to was (wash) our *lorde* feet." The same work also gives us "Brefli of *aithere* testament;" so let no one laugh at the Holderness *aithere* for *either*. Coming to later writers, we find Chaucer (prologue 145) using the word *deed*, which is still good Holderness for *dead*—

"Sche wolde weepe if that sche saw a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were *deed* or bledde."

The word *shaf* or *shav* is often considered a mere vulgarism for *sheaf*. Yet Chaucer talks of "a *shef* of pocok arwes," that is a sheaf of peacock arrows. Spenser, in his "Faery Queene," talks of a "*snaggy* oke," that is a rough, notty oak. Here we see some inkling of the origin of the term *snaggy* in our district, meaning rough in disposition, irritable. Spenser also speaks of "Needments" (*i.e.*, necessaries), a good East Yorkshire word still. "Towple ouer tail" is the Holdernessian for turn a somersault, and we need not be surprised when we find Rodger Ascham (Toxophilus) using the phrase "toppe ouer tayle." Rodger also speaks of "foxes and *foumerdes*, with all other vermine," where we have plainly our Yorkshire dialect word "foumart." King James I., in his comically quaint "Counterblaste to Tobacco," talks of "the spitting and avoyding *fleame*," which last word is still good Yorkshire for *phlegm*. But we have no need to go even so far back, or rather so far out of our way as James I. Shakespeare himself furnishes us with numberless instances illustrating good Holderness words and phrases. "Sum diz an *othersum* disn't," says the rustic of the district, meaning "some do and *others* do not." Now this "*othersome*" is used by Shakespeare in his "Midsummer Night's Dream" (1 i. 26). "Ah, fair cracked *ageean*" may be compared with—

"For wooing here until I sweated *again*,"

From "The Merchant of Venice" (iii., 2, 205).

Again, Shakespeare uses such expressions as "fond *on* her," "he is made as much *on* here," "worth six *on* him," and numbers of others similar, where we at once recognise our Holderness use of *on* for *of*. If we go still further back we get the same sort of thing. Our word "neean," is not simply a corruptien of "none." It is merely the old *ne-an*, that is, *not one*. Again, why should we consider such forms as *hoose*, *moose*, *coe*, as vulgar, when we find that our Saxon forefathers said *hús*, *mús*, *cú*, the *u* being undoubtedly sounded much as our modern *oo* (?) Where our modern version of the Scriptures says, "the same *stone* which the builders refused, the Anglo-Saxon version gives *stán*, our Holderness *stane* or *steean*, then, need not be considered as so very far wrong. It would be easy to go on, but perhaps enough has been said to show that the language of the Holderness labourer is not "bad" English, but simply old English; and that as poor and uneducated speaks now, so spoke—or very nearly so—everybody, high and low, rich and poor, educated and uneducated alike, in times gone by. Looked at, from this point of view, the dialect well deserves a little consideration.

It used to be said by grammarians and writers on language that the total number of words known by a farm labourer does not exceed a few hundreds—say five hundred! Some of our scholars even yet maintain this. But it is evident to any one who

knows our provincial dialects that such a proposition is simply ridiculous, and the work of the English Dialect Society will abundantly prove the absurdity. Why, the Sussex glossary, contains some 1,500 words, the Mid-Yorkshire glossary has probably 4,000, whilst the Holderness glossary contains almost 5,000, and it is probable that one or two thousand more may be added, and that this last will eventually equal in number the Whitby and Lincolnshire glossaries, which contain at least 6,000 or perhaps 7,000 words. And it is to be remembered that these are not *all* the words used by the peasants of the districts treated of, for there must be added *all the words used by them which are like ordinary English*, and are, therefore, not inserted in a glossary. It is evident, from all this, that the labourer of many parts of the country, at least, has a very extensive vocabulary indeed — let messieurs the writers of "Handbooks" of the English language make what they can of it—and the Holderness labourer is certainly not far behind his fellow of other districts. And an examination of the words themselves will show that the dialect of the Holderness is nôt a whit behind modern standard English in power, force, and precision—within its own range that is—whilst it is in some cases superior, and certainly has the advantage in the matter of quaintness and picturesqueness. Of this more anon.

As the Teutonic element—including under the

term Teutonic, Frisian, Saxon, Anglian, Danish, Norse, &c.—is that which enters most largely into the place-names of Holderness, so the same family of languages has provided the vast majority of the words in use in the district. The vast majority of the words in the dialect are Saxon; in fact, the dialect is almost altogether "strong, useful" Saxon, as has been said before. Taking the "Holderness Glossary," just about to be published by the English Dialect Society, and running the eye down the columns for a few pages will abundantly prove this. Sometimes page after page will be passed without meeting with a single word of other than Teutonic origin, words of Celtic, French, or Latin derivation being remarkably scarce. Of course there are some of these "strangers," as we find on a single page, for instance, manish (manage), manishment (management), manner (manure), manty-makker (mantua-maker), marriage lines, marry (by St. Mary), massy (mercy), matthers (matters); but, in comparison with the rest, they are few indeed. Accordingly we need not be surprised to find constantly good old words of Saxon origin occupying the place of new-fangled, and often far less expressive, French importations in Court English. How much better is *lissom* than *active* for instance, *marrow* than *equal* ("Ah nivver seed his marrow at plooin"), *hell* than *diaphragm*, *keppen* than *apropos*, *slocken* than *suffocate*,

sluff than *integument*, *walsh* than *insipid*, *wick* than *lively*, *dowly* than *solitary*, and so on with hundreds more. In some cases Holderness can express is one word what ordinary English is obliged to use a roundabout phrase for. Thus *lishup* means to walk briskly ; *lalther*, to sing discordantly, or out of tune ; *crouse* (or croose), merry, brisk, pert ; *clunt*, a noisy, clattering footstep ; *ug*, a fit of ill-temper ; *accordinlye*, in proportion ; *dow*, to thrive, or be of use, &c. Some Holderness words have no exact equivalents in literary English, and some of them might well be adopted. Of some of these more extended mention may be made later on.

There is one curious feature in the dialect which, I believe, is not found elsewhere in the kingdom ; I mean the total omission of the word "the." It is well known, for instance, that farther west, say about Selby or York, the definite article "the" is always represented by *t'* ; so that "put the horse in the cart" becomes "put *t'* oss i' *t'* cart." In the Huddersfield district, again, *th* is used for the same purpose, so that a man of that district would say, "put th' orse i' th' cart." But the Holderness man knows neither the one nor the other, and simply says, "put 'oss i' cart." The effect of this peculiarity is very striking to a stranger, and the matter will doubtless receive attention at the hands of the philologers. In the

ordinary version, in the fifth verse of the first chapter of Genesis—to give an instance—the word "the" occurs *five times*, whereas in the following Holdernessian paraphrase of the verse it is *wholly omitted*:—"An' God call'd leet day, an' dahkness he call'd neet. An' neet an mooanin we' fost day."

Another peculiarity in the dialect, of the south-eastern part of the wapentake, at least, is the regularity of the pronunciation of such words as *wheat*, *beans*, *tea*, &c., or rather the similarity to the educated pronunciation of English generally. At Selby, at Market Weighton, at Driffield, we hear such words invariably pronounced *weeat*, *beeans*, *teea*, and so forth; and this sort of thing is common over nearly the whole county of Yorkshire. The east Holderness man, however, says *weet*, *beens*, *tee* exactly as we do in received English. How this happens seems difficult, indeed, to account for. Still, a further peculiarity is the total omission of the unfortunate letter *h*. Of course the Holderness man shares the blame with a large portion of his fellowmen of other districts, but he is particularly guilty. Do what you will you cannot get a grown-up native of Holderness to aspirate his *h*, or even to understand the difference between aspiration and non-aspiration of the letter. Some are inclined to think he *does* aspirate the letter when he wishes to be *emphatic*, but I am bound to say that I have never observed a genuine instance of it.

To sum up briefly, the most striking or noteworthy features in the Holderness dialect are :—1. Its purity, that is, its almost perfectly Saxon origin. 2. The great extent of its vocabulary. 3. The total omission, virtually, of the definite article. 4. The pronunciation of the diphthong *ea*, in beat, meal, &c. 5. The total ignoring of the initial *h*. To which may be added, 6. Its persistency ; that is, its little liability to change or deteriorate.

Of course many other dialects exhibit the same persistent holding of its own against all outside forces, in perhaps quite as great a degree, notably such as the Whitby dialect, the dialect of the Craven district, &c. Indeed, it may be said that as a general rule dialects do not change so quickly as is often imagined, and words are not nearly so liable to become obsolete and forgotten, and thus lost for ever, as some philologists fear. Of course it is quite true that not a year is to be lost in prosecuting such work as that undertaken by the English Dialect Society, but it is somewhat stronger language than necessary which informs us that "in a few years it will be too late." With some districts it will, perhaps, be "too late," but with others *many* years will elapse before any very material difference will be apparent. The fact is that provincial forms of speech are much more persistent than the generality of us are inclined to think,

particularly those which belong to specially isolated districts like Holderness, Whitby, &c. And the dialect of East Yorkshire seems one of the most vigorous and persistent. We are enabled to see this from one or two data. In the year 1788 Mr Marshall, a well-known writer of that time on agricultural matters, published a work called "The Rural Economy of Yorkshire." This work contained, amongst other matters, a glossary of East Yorkshire words current at that time; and this glossary has been printed again by the Dialect Society. Now, as the words given by Marshall would no doubt be collected somewhat earlier than 1788, we may fairly assume that they were in use about a hundred years ago. A hundred years is no inconsiderable period in the history of a language. Besides, the past century has witnessed changes which are generally considered likely to cause deterioration in a dialect. There are, first, the railways, with which the East Riding is not badly supplied. Then, again, the watering places of Scarborough and Bridlington have become much more frequented than of old, whilst Filey, Hornsea, and Withernsea have sprung up entirely since the introduction of railways; thus the number of visitors to the Riding must have become immensely greater than it was a hundred years ago. Further, the national schoolmaster has been planted in almost every village for at least one generation.

Altogether, then, one would have thought it not unlikely that the past century might have brought about considerable change in the speech of the East Riding. Yet a close inspection of Marshall's glossary shows hardly any difference whatever. His preliminary remarks on the grammar and pronunciation of the district apply *exactly* at the present time just as they did in 1780. As for the list of words, there is scarcely one which is not still in use in one part or other of the Riding. Indeed, I have failed to find even one word which has altogether become obsolete or forgotten.

An instance of a different kind may be cited in proof of the small liability of the East Riding dialect to change or deterioration—nay, of the almost impossibility of inducing any change. Several years ago a certain village of Holderness possessed a national schoolmaster from another and a far off district. Speaking "good" English himself, the schoolmaster was shocked to hear the uncouth language indulged in by his scholars, and he determined to do something to "improve" it. Being a man of great energy, he at once set to work with a will, and did his best for some years. When he left it was found that *he had succeeded in altering but one word.* That word was "*only*," which the Holderness lads and lasses, of course, pronounced *onn-ly*, or *awnly*, in their own dialect, but which, under the tuition of their

teacher, they had turned into *ownly*, sounding the *ow* very roundly indeed, something like the *ow* in the Leeds man's "owd." Thus there was for a year or two a generation of young men and women in the village talking of "ownly," whilst all the rest of the village said *onnly*, or (the more "refined" people) *awnly*. Half-a-dozen years, however, elapsed, and it was found that not a single one of those men and women had kept up *ownly*; a'l had gone back to their "mother tongue."

Marshall notes that there were in his time *two distinct forms* of the dialect, the first, or more "vulgar," being used by old people, by labourers, &c.; the second, or more "proper," being affected by persons of a somewhat superior position, farmers, wives and daughters, and well-to-do tradesmen. The difference is well illustrated in the "Holderness Glossary," by the sentence, "How many loads of oats are you going to have?" This would be rendered by the farmer's man, "Oo monny leead o' wots aa' ye' boon ti ev?" and by his master's daughter, "Ow many lauds uv awts aa' ye' gawin ta av?" And it is well said that, "the difference between the two is very striking, and it is a question which is the farther removed from the ordinary Court English of to-day, the 'vulgar' or the 'refined.'"

I propose to select from the "Holderness Glossary" a few words for public comment, as

specimens of what is to be met with in investigating the dialect.

Awd-Noah.—This is the name given to partially carbonised wood dug out of the "carrs" of Holderness. It is supposed by the good folks of the district to be from trees submerged at the Flood, hence the name. This "awd-noah" is black, but hard enough to admit of being polished.

Brullions.—This word is not known, so far as I am aware, elsewhere than in the eastern portion of Holderness. It signifies the "heartskirts" and kidney of animals, and is used to make "brullion-pies." It is quite a common thing to hear in a butcher's shop, "Please my mother wants a poond o' *brullions.*"

Carryin-Hatchet.—A humorous expression, made use of with reference to a very plain-looking man. The ugliest man in the village is said to "carry hatchet." Should he, however, meet with one still uglier than himself, he transfers the implement.

Cess.—This was a "parochial dole, formerly paid weekly to farm labourers in the neighbourhood of Hornsea, to eke out scanty wages when work was not plentiful." The custom is said to have been general at the beginning of the present century, when, after the long French wars, agriculture was in anything but a flourishing condition. It is to be noted that this "cess" was not considered as a pauper payment, but a payment to which there

was a *right*, as if it were a benefit society of which the recipient of the dole were members.

Croose or *Crouse*.—This is a very expressive word. It means in the first instance *smart*, *well-dressed*—hence *vain*, *elated with success*. "As *croose* as a loose" is a very common Holderness simile. The word is from the Swedish *krus*, which literally means crisp, curly, but also *excitable*.

Dowly.—This is also a very forcible and expressive word, and one which has hardly any exact equivalent in ordinary English. It is common all over North and East Yorkshire, and probably other parts as well. It expresses all that his meant by dismal, dreary, downcast, dispirited, lonely, un' availing, &c." "She'll mak nobbert a *dowly* wife. , "Oor's is a varry *dowly* hoose." "There's *dowly* deed at their hoose noo muther's gone." "Ah doot he's in a *dowly* way, poor lad."

Fause.—Ray gives this word as meaning *false* or cunning, but that is certainly not its Holderness use. There it means proud, vain, boastful, or simply elated, flushed with success. "Ah's think you'r fine an' *fause* noo you've getten a gran'son," was said in the writer's hearing to an elderly man, and no doubt he was *fause*.

Garnish.—This is preserved in the old song "Beverley Gaol"—

"Then in com gaoler an' thus he did say,
'Noo, my lad, as thoo's munney, for thy *garnish*
thoo mun pay.'"

This "garnish" was a fee paid by a prisoner on entering to the gaoler. It seems to have been spent on tobacco, &c., which was shared by the other prisoners.

Gavel.—No doubt many an intelligent school boy in Beverley has often wondered what could be the meaning of the name of the street called "Toll Gavel," in his native town. It is from the old Anglo-Saxon word *gefol*, which meant tribute, dues, or rent. It is used in the Anglo-Saxon gospels, where we now have "tribute"—"Is it lawful to give *tribute* to Cæsar or no?" The Toll Gavel was probably the place where the town dues or passing tolls were formerly received.

Hon.—Another old Anglo-Saxon word has been curiously preserved at Beverley. In the verse St. Luke xx., 17, in which occurs the expression "the head stone in the corner," the word "corner" is represented in the old Saxon version by *hyrnan*, from *hyrne*, a corner. In Beverley one of the freemen's pastures is called "Hon" (or "Hurn," as *burn* is pronounced *bon*, and *turn*, *ton*, &c.) This is virtually a corner of Westwood, though the two are separated by a hedge. This Hurn, or Hon, is none other than the Anglo-Saxon *hyrne*. Halliwell, in his "Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Terms," gives, as an illustration, a quotation from Wright's Political Songs, "From hale to *hurne*."

Hoppen.—It would probably cause a smile were I

seriously to recommend this word for adoption into the literary language, and yet nothing is more certain than that the literary language stands in great need of such a word, and that it has not got one. Why do we borrow such outlandlish-looking terms as *apropos*, *comme il-faut*, &c ? Why, because we have got no word of our own—nor hardly any collection of words—to express the exact idea. Thus, unless we borrowed from the French, we should be obliged to make use of a long string of adjectives, as "neat, proper, orderly, well-arranged, fortuitous," and so on ; or an equally clumsy and irksome phrase such as "just as it ought to be," "exactly as could be wished," and others to the same purpose. But in *heppen* we have exactly what we want without going abroad at all A falling stick or coal will be pushed back into the fire with the remark, "There, that leeaks *heppener*." A causeway will be swept on Saturday night, and the boy will finish his work with the remark "That'll be *heppen* for Sunday."

Intepunks—a curious term for *children*—seems now only to be used in the Christmas carol of the "Bezzle Cup" women. The first stanza runs thus :—

> God bless the maysther of this hoose,
> The mistheress also ;
> An all the lahtle *intepunks*
> That round the table go.

Liver.—Love was formerly supposed to be seated

in the *liver*, not in the heart, and recently a Holderness swain, writing to his sweetheart, said, "Thoo's stown my *liver* oot o' my belly, an Ah's despadly i' luv wi' tha.'

Peeazan, a rascal, or incorrigible person. This word, like the word *villain*, has had a fall. As *villain* is from *vilein*, which formerly meant nothing more than an honest labourer, so *peeazan* is from *peasant*, and now means something, only a little less black than *villain*.

Rime-up seems to be known only in the neighbourhood of Tunstall, Roos, &c., at present. It means "to raise higher by a link or two," as in the case of the shafts of a cart. Its literal meaning is "to give more room," being said by the learned English scholar, the Rev W. W. Skeat, to be derived from the Icelandic *ryma*, to make room.

Sconce.—Chaucer makes use of a word *ascaunce*, which was a sore puzzle to the commentators. Mr Skeat, however, explained it fully in his Clarendon Press Edition (glossary to Man of Lawe's Tale). It is the same word as our Holderness "sconce"—a pretext, a subterfuge. The derivation is from the old French *ascances*, for the chances.

Slocken.—To suffocate by pouring liquid too rapidly down the throat. "Mind you don't *slocken* that bayn (child) givin' her that milk se fast."

Slug.—A word known by every East Yorkshire boy, doubtless. It means to flog, to beat—to

"wallop," in fact, as the vulgar phrase has it. The word is the same as the German *schlagen*, to beat. In Niebuhr's delightful German stories for children "Heroen-Ge-schichten," we read how Ino, the wicked stepmother, treated the two children Phrixus and Helle very badly, and "*schlug sie*," that is, as we should say in plain Yorkshire, she "slugged" them.

Theet.—A good useful word, and much neater and more concise than water-tight or water-proof, which it has the force of. It's derivation is from the Icelandic *théttr*, notes Mr Skeat.

Vannock.—This word has been heard on only one occasion by the authors of the Holderness Glossary. An old woman at Tunstall was describing a violent thunderstorm which had taken place, and had detached large portions of the cliff and thrown them down. "Cliff com doon i' sike *vannocks* as ah nivver seed," said the old dame. Yet it is certain that although it has been heard so seldom it is, nevertheless, a good old Holderness word. The old woman did not invent a word for the occasion; there is nothing she would be less likely to do. Words are not invented by the uneducated labouring classes.

Wawstart.—This is the East Holderness form in the northern part of the district it is *waystart*. I have reason to know that this word was somewhat of a puzzle to many of the learned or curious

in philology. Yet the derivation is in all probability very simple, being most likely "woe is the heart" (or *wae* instead of *woe*), after the plan of the "woe is me" of the Bible. This "woe is the heart" was shortened to "woe is t'heart," "woe's t'art," and finally, "wawstart." "Granny, there's a bayn getten run ower wiv a gig, an' its leg's brokken." "Oh! wawstart!"

SUPERSTITIONS STILL SURVIVING.

It is, of course, amongst the uneducated classes, and especially amongst the uneducated classes of the remote rural districts of any country, that superstition lingers longest. The more remote and isolated the place, the more likely are old superstitions to survive. Accordingly we should expect districts like Whitby and Holderness, in our own country, to retain a good many old-world beliefs and fancies, and we should not be much deceived. Whitby, especially, seems to possess more lingering superstitions than any other part of the kingdom almost, as a glance through the excellent "Whitby Glossary," by Mr F. K. Robinson, will show. Nor is Holderness far behind. Numberless old superstitious notions, fancies, and beliefs are still to be found existing in different parts of the district, in spite of education, civilisation, communication with the outside world, &c.; a proof that in former times the whole population must have been literally steeped in ignorant and foolish belief in the supernatural. A Holderness man

must have, as it were, begun life in a mass of superstition; must have continued through life in the same; and finally have died in it. Supernatural fears and agencies affected every action and event of his life—his birth, bringing-up, marriage, every-day work, his death.

Of course, much of all this superstition is dying out, but it dies hard. There is a great deal of what may be called dormant or semi-latent superstition, which only comes out at times and under particular circumstances. But when we find an otherwise intelligent farmer's wife trembling when a pigeon alights on the house top, when she is afraid of churning on the Friday, when the farmer himself still nails an old horse-shoe on his stable door to keep off bad influences from the horses, we can hardly consider superstition as a thing of the past. A few words anent some of the commoner instances of lingering belief in occult influences may be not altogether unacceptable, particularly as some of them seem to be peculiar to the district.

To begin with, at his very entrance into life the child is the subject of superstitious fancies and observances. On the very day of his birth his father must call in some friends and provide liquor for the party, with which they proceed to "wet bayn heead." They do not, however, in "wetting bayn heead," put any of the liquor on the head, or, indeed, any other

part of the little stranger; it all finds its way down the throats of the adults, which is, perhaps, supposed to answer the same purpose, that purpose being the ensuring of "luck" to the child. When the child is old enough to be taken out of the house, he is made to pay a round of visits to friends of the family. From whatsoever house he enters for the first time the good woman of the house does not let him depart without presenting him with the following articles—an egg, a bit of salt in a paper, and a box of matches! To these some people add a penny, which seems more useful; but this is not by all considered orthodox. These presents are never omitted; if they were, it would be considered as an insult to the child of the deepest kind, and would be believed to be done for the evil purpose of bringing future ill-luck upon it. The egg may be eaten, and the matches used, but the salt must be religiously kept for a twelvemonth. Not a grain must be used or wasted before the expiration of the year, otherwise the life of the child will be simply a series of mishaps and strokes of bad luck. Two things must be avoided, as you would avoid a serpent—don't let the child look into a mirror or looking-glass, neither may you *cut* his nails; *bite* them off if they grow too long. These things are to be avoided for the space of one year after the birth; if not, the child will certainly die within the twelvemonth. I have seen the grandmother of a

child almost faint away when I had—somewhat mischievously, I fear—held up her grandson to the glass, and she did not get over the shock all the day.

Supposing our child, however, to have got over the innumerable difficulties of his first year, there are other little matters to be attended to during his boyhood. He is on no account to kill a "rain-clock" if he sees one crawling about the roads or fields. These "rain-clocks" are the ordinary ground beetles, and if killed a rainy day is sure to follow. Again, the flower of the hemlock is by no means to be plucked, or even touched, as it is "bad-man wotmeeal" (the devil's oatmeal), and if you do touch this flower "bad-man" will be sure "to get you." This little superstition is rather a useful one than otherwise, and may have been *designed* for the purpose of keeping children from a poisonous plant.

When the child grows up into the schoolboy he does not fail to make use of the time-honoured charm against the sting of the cane, viz., the rubbing of an onion on the palm of the hand. This will infallibly prevent any unpleasant pain, whilst a horsehair stretched across the palm will assuredly split the cane! About this period of his life the boy becomes afflicted with numerous warts, with which, nevertheless, he does not much concern himself, as he has a simple and unfailing remedy for them.

He takes a piece of raw beef—pork or mutton won't do, mind—and rubs it on the wart. The beef is then buried in the ground for nine days, at the end of which time the wart will have gone. The bane of the boy's life at nightfall is the dire hobgoblin known under the various names of *bah-ghaist*, *bargest*, *boh-ghost*, *boggle*, *boggle-bo*, and others. The *boggle-bo* is, however, the one uppermost in the boy's mind when he happens to be in any lonely or "haunted" locality. The bargest's especial business seems to be to predict death in a family, which he does by howling round the house during the night. But it is not only the youth who receives the attentions of these unwelcome beings. Not so long ago a full grown man, a sturdy fellow too, and a local preacher, "seed a real boggle." There could be no doubt about it, for not only did the man see it, but his son too, "an 'oss an all." There is another wicked sprite, who comes in most usefully as a protector of fruit. His name is *Awd Goggie*, and he specially haunts woods and orchards. It is evident, therefore, that it is wise on the children's part to keep away from the orchard at improper times, because otherwise "Awd Goggie might get them."

When the youth grows into manhood he by no means throws off his superstition. To be successful in harvest operations it was formerly considered necessary for all—men and boys—to play at *tut-ball*

on Ash Wednesday. This was the same as the ancient game of *stool-ball*. The practice is now confined to the boys. A curious custom was once prevalent, viz., that of lighting a bon-fire, called Beal-fire, on Midsummer-eve. This is explained by a gentleman learned in history and antiquities to be a relic of the worship of *Baal*, left us by the old Celts, whose god, *Beal*, is supposed to have been identical with the Phœnician *Baal*, but a very learned philologist—of world-wide fame, indeed—"suspects" the whole theory of the worship of Baal in these islands to be "a piece of unmitigated humbug." When doctors thus disagree who shall decide? Whilst on the subject of fires I must not forget to note that the "coffin" superstition is in full vigour yet with most of the good people of Holderness. When a cinder jumps out of the fire its shape must be carefully examined; coffin-shaped ones being prognostications of death, whilst purse-shaped ones betoken good luck, and are called "posses." A stalactite shaped piece of tallow—popularly called a *winding sheet*—also surely foretells the death of one of the family. Certain animals are also the harbingers of death or ill-luck. A dog howling at night is always prognostic of a decease in the family. A *ticking spider*, or *death-watch*, is a similar evil omen. The cock is supposed to have a foreknowledge of death. It is related that within even the last dozen years a

Holderness farmer, conversing with a sceptic, exclaimed, "Then, dis thoo meean ti say oor awd cock disn't knaw when there's boon ti be a deeth i' famaly!" The effect of killing a *rain-clock* has been alluded to. Should a pigeon alight on your house "rig," it is a certain sign of coming misfortune. Should two come on together, your ill-luck will be extreme, whilst three pigeons on your house at once fortell nothing less than death. This last belief is extremely common, and that, too, amongst persons of somewhat superior position, and presumably, therefore, of superior education and intelligence; and every believer is ready with any number of well-authenticated instances of death having immediately followed the apparition of three pigeons "uppa hooso-rig tegither." The crow, too, is a bird by no means liked, and should one be found sitting in any part of the churchyard there will without fail be seen another funeral there within the week. Never kill a bee, for if you do you will not be prosperous in your future undertakings. It is lucky to have money in your pocket the first time you hear the cuckoo each year. The first new moon of the year must not on any account be looked at "through glass"—that is, through the window. When you hear (from some one else) that the new moon is to be seen, carefully turn your eyes from the window, lest you should inadvertently catch a sight of it through the

glass; then go out to the door and take your look, and you will be lucky all the year.

Witches are inconveniently numerous in many parts, but there is one consolation—they can be easily kept at a respectable distance. A horse-shoe is, here as elsewhere, a noted specific against their intrusion into the stable, whilst they are kept from the home circle by hanging to the door-key a *witch-steean*. This "witch-steean" is a flat oolite stone, with a natural perforation, and is found in plenty on the Holderness coast. Certain complaints are cured by walking seven times round the church at midnight. The remedy is simple enough, but there seems some little doubt as to what particular ailment it is that is cured by these nocturnal perambulations. Ague, fits, St. Vitus's dance—locally called *Shakkins*—consumption, "rheumatics," are variously given, whilst many agree in naming "king's evil" as the disease most susceptible to churchyard influences.

Although most supernatural beings are evil-affected towards mortals, yet such is not always the case, and some goblins are good-natured enough. This is particularly the case with a sprite named "Hob-thrust." This charitably-disposed elf comes in the morning and assists the servant lasses with their house-work. There is one little drawback, however, to his kindness, for he always comes scantily clothed, in fact, in a perfectly nude state.

It is related that one girl, whose sense of modesty was offended, offered to make him a "harden"—coarse brown linen—shirt. This proposition was not relished at all by Hob-thrust, who, taking offence, departed, never to return. Another name for this goblin is "Hobthrush," and it is to be noted that this is the "lubber fiend" in Milton's "L'Allegro."

Sellers of dream-books must formerly have driven a fair trade in Holderness, and even now a dream or fortune "interpreter" is often to be found amongst the literary valuables of the cottage. Every dream is carefully and anxiously studied in connection with this book. Have you dreamt of gold—of silver—of fire—of water—of anything at all, in fact, go the first thing in the morning to your dream-book, look out gold, &c., in the index, and turn out the appropriate paragraph. Know your fate as soon as possible.

If you feel a sudden shiver, somebody is walking over your future grave. If your right ear burns it is a sign that you are being praised; if your left, that you are being slandered behind your back. If you trip as you are going *up* stairs, it is a sign of a wedding close at hand. Never spill a grain of salt, for you will have as many happy days as you have spilt grains. A white spot on the thumb nail indicates a coming "gift," one on the first finger a "friend," on the second a "foe," on the

third a "lover," whilst one on the little finger is a sign that you have a "journey to go."

Old Customs.

In the notes on the Holderness dialect I expressed an opinion that dialect *words* do not become obsolete so rapidly as many persons suppose; that, in fact, dialects are much more tenacious of life, in spite of adverse influences, in the shape of railways, schools, and so forth, than we give them credit for. But of the old *customs* of our country districts we are unable to speak in similar language. Nothing is more certain than that ancient customs and usages are dying out very rapidly—ancient customs of all kinds, whether innocent or dubious in character, whether sensible or superstitious, whether dictated by goodwill or ill. In a remote district like Holderness, of course, these old customs have the best chance of surviving for a considerable period; but there can be no doubt that the last hundred years have witnessed the death of many of these old-world practices, whilst not a few have dropped within the memory of persons far from old—nay, further, some have

fallen into such a feeble condition, within the memory of present schoolboys even, that they are all but defunct.

It is thus evident that ere long even those customs which remain — in various stages of senility and obsolescence — will to a very large extent have died out, and it would be quite worth while to ascertain which are still surviving, and to catalogue them before it be too late. And it is certain that Holderness still keeps up a great many of the curious old customs of the middle ages, or of still earlier times. It may be taken as an axiom that any district which—like Whitby and Holderness—has retained many mediæval *superstitions* will also have kept up many mediæval *customs*. I will endeavour to give a short account of a few still remaining customs, only premising that I do not pretend to give anything like an *exhaustive* list. So far, indeed, is the list from being exhaustive, that it may be looked upon as a mere *gleaning* from an abundant crop. What will be mentioned, however, will serve as specimens of all, and will give some idea of the extent and value of the harvest that might be made.

Beginning with the Christian year, viz., Advent, rather than our modern first of January, we find each season of the year possessing its own peculiar customs. No sooner does Advent begin than round

come the Bezzle-cup women, or Vessel-cup women, as they are called in the eastern portion of Holderness. This "vessel-cup" is supposed to be a corruption of *wassail*, and the word "vessel" itself has become further corrupted into "bezzle." These women go from house to house during Advent and Christmas-tide with figures in a box representing the Virgin and Child. They sing an ancient carol, of which the first stanza has been previously given when speaking of "interpunks" in the notes on the dialect. On the arrival of Christmas Eve a very elaborate and important programme is gone through. First, the house is decorated with evergreens, and the "mistletoe" is hung in some appropriate part of the house. This mistletoe, by the way, is a large bundle of evergreens, often decorated with various articles, such as apples, oranges, tapers, &c.; whilst, oddly enough, it often contains not a single particle of real mistletoe. The fact is, however, that this plant is very uncommon indeed in many parts of Holderness. When night draws in the "yule-candles" are lighted. These are generally long mould candles, and the proper colour (in East Holderness, at least) is green; the "yule-clog" (or log) is then put on the fire, and the "frummaty" set on the table. With the "frummaty" various good things are eaten, the chief of which—and which are never absent—are "spice-keeak" (cake) and mince pies. Various

games, in all of which kissing under the "mistle-toe" forms a prominent part, are indulged in by the younger members of the family.

On the morning of Christmas day the boys go round "Christmas boxing" from house to house. There are many versions of the begging rhyme they use, one common one being—

"Ah wish ya a merry Kessenmass an' a happy New Year,
A poss full o' munney an' a cellar full o' beer,
An' a good fat pig at'll sarve ya all year;
Maisther an' missis hoo d'ye do?"

It is not considered lucky to let into the house a *female* of any kind as the *first* visitor; the first to enter must always be a *male*, and he ought to be the bearer of a sprig of some *evergreen*. The Christmas dinner may be passed over as being much like the same entertainment elsewere; so may the "waits," who, however, are always called Christmas singers. The day following Christmas day is devoted by the poor widows in some places to going "a goodin." They trudge from farmhouse to farmbouse carrying a large basket, into which each farmer's wife puts gifts in the shape of eggs, cheesecakes, mincepies, &c., generally accompanying them with a present of coin varying from sixpence to half-a-crown. Many of the poor recipients make a very good thing out of their day's tramp, though they are often sorely tired at night, for a parish of, say, 5,000 acres is not so easily walked over. "Good-tahmin" is another name for this custom.

New Year's Eve witnesses a repetition of the Christmas Eve solemnities — yule-clogs, yule-cannules, frummaty, mistletoes, games, and what not. There are, however, one or two special features on this night. No one goes to bed before midnight, it being considered essential to sit "awd year oot." Towards twelve the church bells ring a mournful peal, then a solemn silence is observed for a few minutes. As soon as the clock strikes twelve, the bells strike up a merry clanging, which is kept up at intervals till one o'clock. This is the common custom of "ringin awd year oot an' new year in.' Meanwhile hands are mutually shaken, and "Happy new years" passed round. When the family rise in the morning they must be careful to let in the first *boy* who comes round "New year's giftin' "—a begging process like that which was indulged in on the Christmas Day. This boy is called the "lucky-bod," and receives a specially liberal gift. Instead of bringing in "summat green," he this time brings in a "clog," or "chump," of wood, and every "new year's gifter" does the same. This, at any rate, is a more useful arrangement for the master of the house, as he frequently accumulates a very fair stock of firewood. The writer has seen a good barrow-full lying on the floor of a cottage on this particular morning. The ordinary "watch-night" services of the places of worship need not be alluded to here. Early in January we have the

"Fond-pleeaf" or "Ploo-lads" round. This "fond-pleeaf" is a plough from which the share has been removed. It is dragged by the "ploo-lads"—fantastically-dressed farming lads. The chief character is one dressed as a female, and called "Besom Bet." Before each door a rude dance is performed, accompanied by music and seasoned with rustic jokes. The usual gifts to these mummers are cheesecakes and money, the first being collected by one of the party wearing a clean white apron and carrying a basket.

Lent has certain observances of its own. "Pankecak Tuesday," or Shrove Tuesday, is an important day to the children. At eleven in the morning the "Pankeeak Bell" is rung, at the sound of which all schools are supposed to break off work to allow the children to "gather sticks to fry pankeeaks with," and the rest of the day is spent as a holiday. In the northern portion of Holderness a custom called "egg-throwlin" is fast dying out. Hard-boiled eggs are dyed and "throwled"—rolled or bowled—in the fields, the day being hence called "Throwl-egg Day." The custom of playing "tut-ball" on Ash Wednesday, now only kept up by boys, but formerly by adults also, has before been alluded to, as well as the belief that unless they did so the men would fall sick in harvest. In the same part of Holderness the Sundays in Lent were formerly called respectively Tid, Mid, Miseray, Carlin,

and Paum Sundays, whilst Easter Sunday itself was known as Good-feast Day. On "Tid," the second Sunday, the *Te Deum* was chanted, "Mid" is the middle Sunday; "Miseray," the fourth, was the day on which the *Miserere* was chanted. On Carlin Sunday "carlins" were, and still are, universally eaten. These "carlins" are dried peas, fried in butter, and eaten with pepper and salt. They are also called "brussled" peas, and every child has his pockets full, and eats at them incessantly through the day, little to the benefit, one would think, of his digestive organs. "Paum Sunday" witnesses a general gathering of "paums" or "palms," which are sprigs of willow covered with catkins. Houses are decorated with these "paums," and sprigs are carried in the hand. "Collop Monday" must not be forgotten (the day before "Pankeeak Tuesday)," on which the standing dish for dinner consists of ham or bacon "collops," generally with the addition of fried eggs. In some parts Ash Wednesday was always known by the dinner of "fruttasses" or fritters; hence it was called "Fruttass Wednesday." Mid-Lent Sunday was more commonly known as "Motherin-Sunday," from the almost universal custom of children visiting their parents on that day. No greater hardship could be inflicted on a serving lad or lass than preventing him or her from visiting the "awd fooaks" on Motherin-Sunday.

On Rogation Monday, or "Rammalation-day," the old custom of "beating the boundaries" took place, nor has it yet gone out of use, the present writer having assisted at the ceremony on several occasions within the last twenty years. The parish authorities perambulated the boundaries, accompanied by crowds of youngsters, who were made to remember important points by various devices, not a little rough horse-play being sometimes indulged in. The writer is not likely to forget the exact spot where the boundary of a certain parish crosses the "beck," although it is a good number of years since he was pitched headlong and unexpectedly into the very place one Rammalation-day. A curious custom seems to survive at Bridlington. On the evening before the Whitsuntide fair the lads and lasses assemble on the church green, each armed with a lump of chalk, with which they endeavour to chalk each other's backs. The night in question is called "Chalk-back-neet." The "Bealfire," or Midsummer bonfire, has been mentioned already. The custom called "Bonnin-awd-Witch," once common throughout northern and eastern Holderness, still survives in a few villages in the neighbourhood of Bridlington. On the last day of harvest a fire of stubble is made in the field, in which peas are parched. The peas are eaten with a good supply of ale, after which the lads and lasses have a romp about the fire, and endeavour to blacken each other's faces with burnt peas.

The Fifth of November was an important day, and is so still in many places. On the eve of the day, that is on the eve of the fourth of the month, a very silly and offensive practice prevails in one or two villages of East Holderness, notably Ottringham. It may be known, of course, elsewhere. This night is called "Babblin-neet," a term which requires some little explanation. The word "babble" is used to signify a leathern bag with a string attached, the bag containing a stone; the whole forming a very ugly instrument. With these babbles the farm-lads and apprentices go round the village and "babble" the doors—in plain language, strike blows at them. Should the master of the house happen to be on the look out, a little *contretemps* not unfrequently results. I have been asked what is the derivation of the word, but I do not know, I candidly confess. *Bauble* has been suggested, so has *babel*, or confusion, but both may be wofully wide of the mark. The Fifth of November is called "Ringing-day." The church-bells are rung at intervals during the day in many parishes, and at night an entertainment to the ringers and their friends, called "Ringin-supper," is provided, the cost being paid by the churchwardens, outsiders being generally admitted at a moderate payment per head. At Beverley a fair is held on that day, called "Ringin-day Fair."

The month of November is the one in which most of the statute fairs for the hiring of servants for the ensuing twelvemonth takes place. The hirings are commonly called "sittins," from the former custom of sitting on the steps of the market cross by those waiting to be hired. The week following Martinmas Day is a holiday to the farm servants, who generally spend the time at their own homes. The Sunday in this week is known as "Rive-kite Sunday," literally tear-stomach Sunday, a title the origin of which it is not difficult to guess at. The good old mother prepares the very best dinner in her power for her lads and lasses, and such ample justice is done to the meal that the somewhat coarse but very expressive title *rive-kite* has been given to the day.

Thus the year has gone round, and soon the appearance of the "vessel-cup women" betoken the beginning of another.

If there is one thing which more than another is noticeable in the Holderness man it is his fondness for good cooking and good living, and the fortunate knack he seems to possess of generally having this little weakness satisfied. I believe that in no part of England are the housewives better cooks than in Holderness, whilst it is given to but few others to even equal them; and hardly any men are so well fed according to their income as are the Holderness men. The good wives of Holderness are especially

great in teas. They can cook a good dinner, but it is upon tea—on state occasions—that all their powers are put forth. The tea-table, on a birthday say, in a farmer's "room," is a sight not to be forgotten. There will be cold boiled ham, cold tongues, ham rashers, eggs, cheese, celery, &c., for those who don't care for flesh meats, whilst the astonishing display of confectionery—tarts, cheese-cakes, rice-cakes, plum-cakes, jams, marmalades, biscuits of various sorts, with other things too numerous to mention, if, indeed, one knew all the names—is everlastingly remembered by any stranger who has the good fortune to be present at the meal. It is not astonishing, therefore, that not a few of the manners and customs have reference to eating and drinking in some shape.

A special feature of the *menu* at a Holderness tea is the "both-day keeak." This birth-day cake is always present on state occasions, whether "both-days" or not. The "both-day keeak" is made of alternate layers of paste and fruit—currants, sugar, candied-peel, &c.,—each layer being so thin and so deftly placed that the whole ten layers—for five layers of fruit and five of crust are considered the correct number—produce a cake not an inch in thickness. Of course a ring and a button are hid in the different parts of the cake, and lucky is the damsel who gets the former in her piece, and woe to the swain whose ill-fortune it is to get the latter, for the first indi-

cates that the recipient will be married before long, just as the latter shows that its finder is condemned to life-long single-blessedness.

The word "dip" calls up two different dishes in different parts of the district. In the western portion it is used with reference to the following dish. In former times a very large suet-pudding was made, in the top of which a large hole was cut. This hole was then filled with treacle, and the whole set in the middle of the table. The pudding was so cut as to leave the hole containing the treacle intact. Each person *dipped* each mouthful of the pudding into the "dip" or treacle before carrying it to his mouth. In the eastern parts of Holderness, on the contrary, "dip" stands for gravy or fat of some kind. A large dish of fried bacon or ham, with plenty of the rich brown gravy the good dames know so well how to make, used to be set in the middle of the table. Hot "light" cakes were supplied, and pieces were broken off and dipped into the dish containing the gravy. Now-a-days, however, we have so far improved as to help each person with a spoon to whatever bacon and "dip" he is to have, so that he can "dip" for himself on his own plate.

The good old Yorkshire custom of sending a present at pig-killing time to neighbours is in full life in Holderness. Holderness, however, differs somewhat from other parts of the country. In the

neighbourhood of the city of York, for instance, it is always "pig-fry" which is sent—that is, a taste of liver, "leets" (or lungs), heart, &c., the whole neatly covered with a bit of the diaphragm. This part of the business also obtains in Holderness, but here there is an *additional* present sent *later on*. This second present consists of cooked, or at any rate prepared, articles, and generally includes a mince pie, a link or two of sausage, a bit of black-pudding, a "standin' pie" (pork raised pie), with sometimes a bit of "chine." The whole stock of articles sent, prepared or unprepared, is spoken of as "pig-cheer." The liberality of the cottager on such occasions is very remarkable.

The ancient custom of riding the "stang," so well known in the north of England, is managed in so many different ways that a short account of one as it was actually carried out in a Holderness village a year or two ago may not be altogether unacceptable. It is, of course, unnecessary to say that wife-beating is the only misdemeanour punished by the "stang." It was late in the autumn season, and when, about seven in the evening, the stangers made their appearance it was already dark. Opposite the door of the wife-beater one of the party of farm lads, apprentices, &c., was mounted on a ladder, the ladder being borne on the shoulders of seven or eight of the others. As soon as the occupant of

the ladder was mounted he shouted "Ah ride stang." "Whees for?" was asked. "For awd——." On this the party started for the churchyard. The ladder and its rider were carried seven times round the church, the procession stopping at each round before the principal door, whilst the man on the ladder repeated the following doggerel:—

"With a ran dan dan, at sign of awd tin can,
An much ageeain his ease does—ride stang;
He walloped her; he bang'd her; he bang'd her indeed;
He bang'd her, although she nivver stood i' need.
He beat her wi nayther stick nor storr,
Bud he up wiv his fist an doon'd her."

The third and fourth lines were shouted as a kind of refrain by all the mob. The procession then returned to the village, and, after shouting the whole set of doggerel in front of the offending husband's house the party disbanded. The same programme was carried out for seven successive nights, but on the last night a straw-stuffed effigy, to represent the wife-beater, was burnt in front of his door amidst indescribable yelling and hooting, with threats that *he* would be served like the effigy the next time he so far forgot himself as to strike his wife. The ruffianly fellow was frightened almost out of his wits, and, indeed, took to his bed for some days after.

Some of the old customs which have a superstitious character have been alluded to before, such as the tying of "witch-steeans" to door keys, and

the nailing of old horse-shoes on stable doors to keep out witches. There are others of the same character, more or less, which might have been mentioned. When a "hairy caterpillar" is found the correct thing is to take it in the left hand and throw it over the right shoulder, saying at the same time "good luck." If one then walks away without looking to see where it fell "luck" will certainly follow, but to look behind and see where the caterpillar dropped is most disastrous. Some other customs are, so to speak, semi-superstitious. There is a disagreeable custom of "patching" on May 29th, or "Royal Oak Day." To "patch" is to pelt with eggs—if the eggs are rotten so much the better—all who have not a sprig of oak about them. Accordingly, the boys of the district carry about with them twigs of "Royal oak" on the 29th of May, as faithfully as Welsh boys carry leeks in their hat-bands or button-holes on the 1st of March. Those who do not show the proper emblem are called "Papishes." As it has been said, "What connection the non-observance of this custom has with Popery it is difficult to discover." Formerly school children demanded a holiday as a right on this day, saluting the master with :—

"Royal-oak day, twenty-ninth o' May;
If ya deean't give us halliday we'll all run away."

But this "patching" business is not necessarily

confined to that particular day, though it is chiefly so.

In the old days, when public conveyances were not so common as now, the method of journeying called "ride-an-tie" was common, and no doubt did good service. When two men had only one horse between them, they each rode and walked alternately; the one who had ridden always *tying* his horse by the roadside, where it awaited the arrival of the walker, who, on coming up, mounted and rode a similar distance.

The custom of paying "footings," so common in other districts, seems to have also flourished greatly in this. Not a boy could be apprenticed, not a farm-lad could commence service, without the payment of "footing" money to his mates. The penalty for entering the church bell-chamber for the first time was always sixpence, or a quart of beer at the least. When a new tenant entered on a farm he was always supposed to entertain his neighbours at an early opportunity. Even yet "house-warmings" are far from uncommon. We have seen how not even a poor prisoner was let off this penalty, the sum in which he was mulcted being called "garnish." Nay, more, even the new-born child was, and is still—expected to contribute—through its father—its quota of "dhrink."

Of the many old customs having relation to

harvest operations none were more interesting than those attending the last load. This last load was called "hockey"—the same as the Suffolk "horkey" —a word which has now dropped out of use, or nearly so. The "hockey" was followed by the men and boys, who shouted a rude rhyme, of which there are almost as many versions, or rather variations, as there are of the 'stang' rhymes. One of the forms begins—

"We hev her; we hev her;"
A coo in a tether, &c.

But the commonest one at the present time seems to be

"Here we cum at oor toon end,
A pint o' yal an a croon ti spend;
Here we cum, as tight as nip,
An nivvor fell ower, bud yance in a grip.
Hip, hip, hurrah!"

A scrambling for apples followed the arrival in the stackyard, and, of course, the harvest-home supper was forthcoming. Most of the ceremonies attendant on the securing of the last load have been allowed to drop in many parts of the district, though a few children still generally accompany the cart and shout the rhyme.

It was formerly the practice to have a great game at football on Beverley Westwood the Sunday before the races. To this game the lads came from all the surrounding districts, many walking a great number of miles to be present. It is related that

"about 50 years ago the magistrates determined to put down this desecration of the Sabbath, and issued notices forbidding the sport, at the same time swearing in a large body of special constables. Nevertheless the footballers assembled as usual, only in greater numbers, and the ball was thrown on the turf, when a general fight took place between them and the constables, resulting eventually in the victory of the latter, and since then the Sunday football playing has not been repeated."

Holderness has, or had, some peculiarities in connection with religious services which I have rarely heard of elsewhere. There was formerly, in addition to the clerk and sexton, an official called the "dog-knawper.' He was in reality the beadle, but obtained the title of "dog-knawper" from one of his duties, which was that of driving stray dogs out of the church during service. Stray dogs have probably greatly decreased in numbers; at any rate, the dog-knawper is no more. At a wedding it is still the custom for the bridegroom to kiss the bride on the altar steps at the conclusion of the ceremony, this being followed up by like salutations from the bridesmaids. Not long ago a clergyman new to the district, observing what seemed to him all this unseemly behaviour in a place of worship, animadverted strongly on the matter, to the great bewilderment of all those assembled,

who hadn't the faintest notion what he was driving at. As soon as the bride re-enters her father's house, after the ceremony is concluded, there is a general scrambling on the part of the guests to get the first kiss of the bride, as it is believed that the person who does so will be extremely lucky. As the bridegroom, however, is nearest, he is generally the lucky individual.

At a baptism, or "Kessenin," there are nearly always two godfathers and two godmothers, whatever the sex of the child. The water placed by the clergyman on the infant's face must on no account be *wiped off*, but must be allowed to *dry in*. In the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, in some parishes, at the words "Draw near with faith," all those who intend partaking actually do "draw near," going in a body to the altar rails. Within the last few years a few instances of a similar custom in other parts of England have been brought to light in the *Guardian* newspaper.

In many Holderness villages it is customary to toll the church bell for a few seconds exactly an hour before service time. This is understood by the people as a dressing bell, indicating the time to begin to put on "Sunday things" for church.

CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.

That we English are essentially of Low German origin no one now doubts for a moment, and "of all our Continental kinsfolk," says Mr Freeman, "the Frisians . . . are the nearest of all. Their tongue is still nearer to ours than the other forms of the Low Dutch. In short, it might not be too much to say that they are Englishmen who stayed at home, and did not cross into Britain." To which it may be added that the people of Holderness are amongst the most Frisian of all the inhabitants of this island. I believe it is a remarkable fact—though it is, after all, what might have been expected—that the points of similarity between Holderness in England and Friesland on the Continent are both very numerous and very striking—at least so I have been told over and over again by a very intelligent Englishman, whose business takes him often into the country villages of the latter province. The land, he says, has a very considerable resemblance to that of Holderness, the occupations of the people are simi'ar, the dialect has some

striking points of likeness with that of Holderness, and, above all, the character of the people so much resembles that of their Holderness cousins. "These Frisians," says Mr Freeman again, "our nearest kinsmen, were always a free and bold people." The same two adjectives may be used, it is to be hoped, in speaking of *all* Englishmen. But there is something in the character of the modern Frieslander, a something hardly describable, hardly get-at-able, so to speak, perhaps, which is said to bring irresistibly before one's mind the modern Holdernessian—so says my friend, and I for one have very great faith in his judgment. There is a certain boldness, a certain independence, a certain love of industry, and especially farming pursuits, a certain hatred of interference and overbearing assumption on the part of others, a certain abruptness if you will, and withal a certain quiet, dry, if somewhat heavy, sense of humour, common to the two, of quite a peculiar flavour if one may say so. But it is the Holderness man and not the Frieslander we are discussing.

One of the first things which strikes most strangers in the Holderness man's character is his sturdy independence—his unwillingness to bow down before any unauthorised superior. He feels himself to be a *man*, and will not "knuckle under" to every one who chooses to consider himself as

one of his "betters." There is probably no part of England and Wales where less hat-touching is done than in Holderness. Not that the Holderness man is proud or conceited, or rebellious against lawful authority. On the contrary, I believe there are no people more ready to give honour where honour is due than the good folks of this district. But they will not bow and scrape and curtsey to every stranger with a black coat, or a better hat than usual, as one sees done in some parts. In Wales, for instance, the labouring classes invariably cringe before every well-dressed man they see, although he may, for aught they know, be the greatest fool or scamp in the country-side. A story told by an East Holderness labourer—given in full in the "Holderness Glossary"—well illustrates this phase of the character of the people. The labourer tells that he was at work on the railway "when up cums a swellish sooart of a chap in a gig, an' a woman wiv him." This "swellish sooart of a chap" (evidently from the south or west of England) bawls out in an imperious tone, "Hey, there, my man, open that gate." This was rather too much for our Holdernessian, who thereupon "just leeaks ower his shoodher without gerrin (getting) up," and shouts, "Thoo may oppen it thysen." After this decided answer there was nothing left for the man in the gig but to get down and open the gate

for himself. After he had got his horse through he came up to the labourer and gave him *three-halfpence for his politeness!* Not to be outdone, the recipient touches his hat and says, "Thank ye' sor," and then goes off to "dhrink his health wi' brass."

There are remarkably few resident gentry in Holderness. In all the poor-law divisions of South Holderness there are scarcely three mansions belonging to and actually inhabited by genuine old county families. The farming class, therefore, is considered the *elite of the district*, and in many cases, indeed, the chief farmers have the houses and the means, if not the education and the manners, of the "squires" of some parts of England and Wales. On the other hand, the great bulk of the working-classes are very comfortably off for people in their condition, and there is comparatively little of downright destitution. The middle class, consequently, numbers an unusual proportion of the total population. Hence there is a tolerably well-developed feeling of equality amongst the people, and it is felt that, as a general rule, and taking all in all, "one man is as good as another." There is, however, it must be confessed, a tendency to unduly exalt the farmer, and, above all, the "rich" farmer.

"Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters away? Proputty, proputty, proputty,—that's what I 'ears 'em saay,"

says Tennyson's "Northern Farmer," and the Holderness farmer's idea is often the same, although his dialect may be different. There is said to be somewhere in Holderness a village inn whose sign is popularly known as the "Three Alls." A soldier is supposed to be saying, "The soldier fights for all." Near him is a clergyman saying, "The parson prays for all." But looking on is a jolly farmer in in the act of pulling out his purse with the question, "Hey, bud wheea *pays* for all?" If we would believe the farmer, we should deny that the manufacturer, the miner, the merchant pay any taxes at all.

The Holderness people as a whole are a remarkably industrious class. There is nothing of the Saturday half-holiday so common elsewhere—in many places, at least—and St. Monday is an unknown saint in the Holderness calendar. With the love of industry there is a hatred of gossip, of dawdling, of purposeless talk—of anything, in fact, which wastes time and produces nothing of value. Not but that the district has its inveterate gossips and scandal-lovers, but on the whole it is remarkably free from them. A story is told in the "Holderness Glossary," which is so good, and illustrates so well the prevalent dislike to gossip and time wasting, that I venture to transcribe it in full, especially as it is an admirable specimen of the dialect. "Fost ofther Ah was wed"—begins the

story-teller—"we lived at Olbro (Aldborough), me an mah weyf. We lived iv a raw (in one of a row) of hooses, an Ah used ti be sadly plagued wi gossapin awd women. Ivvry neet, as seer as ivver Ah com yam fra my wark, Ah fun (found) ivver si monny awd baggishes gossapin i' my hoose. Mah weyf didn't want em, no' me neether. Sooa, thinks Ah ti mysen, Ah'll cure ye', my lasses. Whah then, yan neet Ah com wom (home) fra my wark, an there they war, three o' fower on em, stannin gossapin i' deersteead (just in the doorway). Sooa ah just walks up ti deer, and then stops. 'Oh, ah see, Ah've getten ti wrang hoose,' Ah says, an Ah pertended ti gan on ti next un. They all leeakt at me a minnit, an then yan on 'em says 'Wrang hoose! What d'ye mean? This is your hoose, is'nt it?' 'My hoose!' Ah says, 'Then what are *you* deein in it? I awlas thowt ah teeak (took) this hoose fo' me and mah weyf, but it seems Ah's wrang. It seems *you* want this hoose. Then you sall hev it. We'll gan oot an let ye' hev it. We'll gan oot ti morn.' My wod, but did'nt they leeak fond (foolish) noo. They bussled oot sharp; an see ye', Ah nivver had yan on em i my hoose gossapin ageean as long as ah stopped at Olbro."

There is no more liberal man than the Holderness man. He likes to do the handsome thing, and he likes to have the handsome thing done by him. Shabby and illiberal treatment he will neither give nor

receive, as a general rule. Go to his house, and you shall receive most hospitable entertainment; ask him for assistance, and you shall not be denied; work for him, and you shall find him not only just, but, in the majority of cases, generous. And should the Holdernessian experience scurvy or illiberal treatment from any man he is not slow to let that man know what he thinks on the subject. Some time ago a certain church dignitary, preaching one Sunday evening in a strange church, missed the last train in the direction of his home. As the reverend gentleman was a good dozen miles from home, he was in rather a fix. However, a man in the parish offered to drive him home. The offer was of course accepted, and late at night—in fact, nearly midnight—he was set down at his own door. Fumbling about in his pockets he at last produced, as a reward for his driver's trouble—a sixpence! The poor fellow could scarcely believe his eyes, but, rising in a moment to the occasion, he sung out, "Thoo may keep it ti decorate thi choch wi'." It was to be the *harvest thanksgiving service* in the reverend gentleman's own church on the following Wednesday; hence the pith of the retort. The great dignitary, no doubt sadly bewailing the ingratitude and growing insolence of the "lower class," went in the direction of his own comfortable home, leaving the poor fellow who had assisted him to enjoy his twelve or fifteen miles' drive back on a cold, dark, and stormy autumn night.

The Holderness man has a keen sense of humour, and especially loves a practical joke. The humour is dry and quiet, perhaps, but genuine for all that. Here is a tolerably rich instance of what the youth of the district is capable of. Some years ago the teachers in the Sunday schools were not seldom men almost totally illiterate—earnest, pious, well-meaning men, perhaps, but barely able to read, and almost devoid of any higher educational training. It thus happened that after the introduction of the national schoolmaster into the day schools many of the children attending the Sunday schools were considerably more learned than their Sunday teachers. A story runs that on one occasion one of these Sunday teachers, a decent but ignorant labouring man, was much struck by a new map of England in the school. Addressing himself to one of the sharpest of the boys he said, "What's this thing uppa wall?" "That's a map, a map of England," was the reply. "A map. What's a map for?" "Why, its a sooart o' picther you knaw—hez all pleeaces doon on it." "Aw, ah see; then wheear's Yorrksher?" "Here's Yorrksher," said the lad. "Wheear's Otthringham, then?" "Its about here"—pointing near a small circle indicating the position of the town of Patrington—"bud neeam is'nt put doon." "Aw, ah see," again said the old fellow, "Bud what's that round ring for." "That round ring," said the young

rascal, with a roguish wink at his class mates, "Why that's awd——well (pond)!" "Hey, ah see; noo that's what ah call varry clever; ah sud'nt ha thowt they could ha deean sike things si weel," was the teacher's final comment as, much pleased, he settled down to his proper work of "Scriptur expoondin."

The really good stories anent practical joke of various kinds would fill a considerable volume. One wonders why some one doesn't start a "Comic Annual" in the Holderness dialect, something after the manner of the "Tom Threddlehoyle Almanack" in the Barnsley dialect; there would be no lack of matter for some years, at all events. Here is a specimen of what might be met with in any quantity.—You knew awd N——! Hey, why he was a sthrange bad awd chap was awd N——; a despud chap fo' choppin up owt at ivver he cud lig his hands on, fo' feyrwood. He used to send onny of uz lads of a neet ti steal him owt at wad chop up. Sooa yah neet we thowt we wad fix him. Sooa we taks his weshin tub—a new un, an a varry good un—an runs inti hoose wiv it, and bangs it on ti fleer, an sez, "Noo N——, leak sharp an smash her up for onnybody cums." "All reyt, my lads," says awd fella, and oot he brings his axe an staves tub in in a crack. Just when he'd getten it nicely smashed up, he sees *his awn neeam* stamped o' bottom o' tub? "Dang it, why

this is mi awn tub, you ——" But we didn't hear ni mooar ; we were off far eneeaf, you may be seer." Who but a Holderness youth would dream of putting the bell rope through one of the narrow loop-holes of the church tower, and ringing a peal at dead of night, to the no small consternation of the whole village in general, and the utter bewilderment of the sexton in particular, who had carefully locked the church doors, and had the keys with him in the house? Who else would think of inventing a *ruse* for delaying the parson till after twelve, in order to put off the wedding of a mate for another day? What other individual would conceive the idea of inserting a long clothes-prop through the thatch of an old cottage, and under the bed whereon slept a superstitious old fellow, and then using the pole as a lever, with the effect of causing the poor old chap to run down into the street in his nightgear? Of course, all this was very wicked, but the Holdernessian youth does not always stop to consider the *pros* and *cons* when a practical joke is on the *tapis*.

A DAY AT SPURN.

There are some places which are, so to speak, overvisited, whilst others—far more in number—are not visited enough. We all go to Brighton and Scarborough, to Matlock and Cheltenham, to Snowdon and the Trossachs; or, if we are "doing" the Continent, to Paris and Rome, Chamouni and the Righi, and so forth. But how many places well-worth seeing do we miss, simply because they happen to be a little off the beaten track. We all know the queenly Wye, but how few of us think of going on to its next neighbour the Usk, many parts of which are beautiful beyond description! Few of us miss Dovedale and the Peak, but fewer of us still pay a visit to Wharfedale and Whernside, and yet the latter are almost as well worth seeing as the former. Just as one hears of Scarborough visitors journeying to see Flamborough Head; and well worth seeing it is, with its fine bluff chalk cliffs, its Dane's Dyke, its associations with Ida, the "Flame-bearer," its Robin Lythe's Hole Cave; but no one thinks of paying a

visit to its neighbour, Spurn Head, some miles to the south. And certainly there is not so much to attract the mere sight-seer in this latter headland. Nevertheless, the fact that it is the Ocellum Promontorium of Ptolemy, that there once stood the flourishing and historical port of Ravenspur, that the way to it by land lies through one of the most fertile districts in England, ought to be enough to induce some to go and see it. At any rate, happening to be in Hull, and not having seen Spurn, the present writer determined to spend a day in visiting this "Land's End," as it is often called locally, especially as in no guide book I possessed was any information of any consequence respecting this neglected promontory.

We rose early—the writer was accompanied by three or four friends—for the train which was to take us two-thirds of our distance started at the somewhat early hour of 6.45 a.m. It was somewhat cold and grey that August morning, and we saw, after leaving the station at Southcoates, that the mist was thick on the broad Humber, but it was plain that the sun would presently break through the fog and bring a glorious day. As we jolted through the country—the local railway seemed to have an unaccountable fancy for shaking its passengers that morning—and saw field after field of splendid wheat—whole miles of wheat, indeed, seemed to be visible from the windows—we should

have quickly learnt, had we not known it before, that we were passing through a very fine corn country indeed.

By this time we are at Hedon, otherwise Headon, or Heydon, as it was spelt anciently. Hedon is one of the tiniest of "rotten" boroughs. The total number of inhabitants is not much over 1,000, and yet, I have been told, they have their mayor, recorder, six or eight aldermen, besides a small army of town councillors. Whether every man in the town is a member of the Corporation was not stated. We heard a malicious whisper to the effect that there are not enough men in the borough able and willing to worthily fulfil the duties of chief magistrate—not enough, that is, to admit of any great variety in that respect. Nevertheless, Hedon used to be a thriving sea-port, and once possessed seven churches, of which but one remains. This one remaining is a fine building, and is regularly known in the locality as the "King o' Holderness." The harbour has now long been blocked up, and the town is two or three miles from the Humber. Before 1832 the borough sent its two members to Parliament, and profitable events to the electors must the elections have been. An old man in the train informed us that he, as a "freeman" of Hedon, used once upon a time to receive five pounds for his vote. But times changed sadly, and towards "end o' time,"

that is towards 1832, he received only seven and sixpence; of course, with "as much meat and dhrink as yan liked to tak." The good old fellow hadn't a notion on which side he had ever voted, except that it was the "reyt" side, and he evidently seemed to think that Hedon was disfranchised solely because the "pay was getting si bud!"

Passing Burstwick, or Brustewyck, where the lords of the segniory had a castle—now wholly gone—and Ottringham—which we were informed was the station for Roos, or Ross, whence the Lords de Ros originally took their title, and for Sunk Island, which is considered as in many respects the finest corn land in the wapentake—we presently arrived at Patrington, where we were to leave the railway. Here we found that the carrier to Easington, of whose conveyance we intended to avail ourselves, did not purpose starting for an hour almost, having to wait for other trains, so we strolled on to see the town.

Though never a borough, or the possessor of seven churches, like its neighbour Hedon, Patrington was once a flourishing market town and seaport. It is now neither the one nor the other, but simply a biggish village of some 2,000 inhabitants. Camden specially notes the agreeable situation of Patrington, and, indeed, for Holderness the view is not bad. There is a fine view of the Humber, and the Lincoln-

shire shore opposite, with the flourishing port of Grimsby with its hundreds of masts, and its magnificent hydraulic tower of over 300 feet in height. The mist had now quite cleared off, and this tower was one of the most prominent objects in the view. The church is a beautiful cruciform structure, with a very elegant pointed spire nearly 200 feet high. As Hedon church is the King of Holderness, so Patrington church is the Queen of Holderness, and it well deserves the title. We somewhat marvelled to see a Greek motto on the principal inn, the "Hildyard Arms." We had intended walking as far as the "Haven," but finding it to be a mile from the church we thought better of it, and contented ourselves with looking at the "Union," the "Lock-up," the "Factory," or "Raitory," as this last is often called.

Our coachman being ready by this time, we mounted up into his vehicle, the said vehicle being of the most wonderful kind. It was of the dog-cart build, but constructed to carry apparently any number of passengers required. At any rate, the owner couldn't tell how many it *would* hold. He had seen "fowerteen" in it, but evidently thought it far from full on that occasion. We had a delightful drive of some six miles to Easington, the most delicious of breezes blowing the while from the broadening Humber, which we could now see a

mile or so away. We passed the villages of Welwick (where there is an interesting old church), Weeton, and Skeffling *en route*. Easington is the last village of any consquence on the rapidly narrowing headland. Here our postman-carrier—for he combined the two offices—stopped, but he offered to drive us to Kilnsea, the next village, or even to Spurn itself, if we wished. As, however, we found that the distance to the Head was barely six miles, we decided to walk.

Two miles or so along a road becoming always more sandy and more disorganised brought us to Kilnsea, a little village with a little red brick church, bran new, the old church having gone over the cliff half a century ago (I have mentioned that the font is preserved in the "Crawshaw" field at Keyingham. At this village all perceptible road ends, and we had a good three and a half miles to do along a narrow crescent-shaped ridge of sand, at the end of which our goal, Spurn Lighthouse, could be plainly seen. The view from this ridge was charming to us, and would have been charming to anybody who likes a good breadth of sea to look at. On our right was the Humber, here some seven miles wide, and dotted here and there with craft of every size and build. Across the estuary we could see miles and miles of the Lincolnshire coast, and could almost distinguish the very fields; the whole from our point of view assuming a beautiful bright-

green tint. We could see a good stretch of the Yorkshire shore too, and round on the other side of the semi-circular sweep made by the Humber-bank we could see the "Queen of Holderness," with her head elevated far above all her surroundings. On our left we had a splendid view of the boundless sea, with nothing whatever to interrupt the prospect, northward, eastward, and southward. Further inland the day must have been a "reeker" (Anglice, smoking-hot), but here we were as cool as cucumbers. After a mile or two we began to find walking on the loose and apparently bottomless sand pretty hard work, and many wistful looks were cast ahead to the big lighthouse tower, which seemed to be little, if at all, nearer. Narrower and narrower became the tongue of land, or rather sand, and lower and lower the little ridge which, backbone-like, runs along the centre of it, till at last there came a place where the waters had evidently met—the Humber and the sea—during some spring tide, the ridge being washed down level with the rest. However, after a few yards of depression the sandridge once more resumed its pigmy elevation, and proceeded on its way quite unconcerned.

One of our party was something of a botanist, but there was but little to interest him. On the top of the sandy backbone there were some tufts of rough grass, besides coltsfoot (called *fooal feeat* locally), and one or two other sand-loving plants,

but nothing at all rare or valuable. As we neared the Head we found great quantities of samphire. This plant, which the rustics call "rock-semper," is considered a delicacy by all the dwellers along the banks of the great estuary. It is boiled, and then generally eaten cold with salt to bread and butter at tea. We could not help remarking the excellence of the "sands"—it seems almost an absurdity to talk of sands where everything is sand—on the sea side of the peninsula; long stretches of beautiful, firm, and almost perfectly level sand, which would make the reputation of many a watering-place. We took to this firmer ground, of course, walking within a foot or two of the gently rippling wavelets, and found ourselves getting along much more satisfactorily.

About half a mile from the extreme end of the headland—that is from the true Spurn Point—the tongue of land widens out, whilst the central ridge disappears. The result is an elliptical stretch of land some few hundred yards long by one or two hundred broad. On this ellipse stands the whole colony of Spurn. And we were somewhat surprised to see what a colony it was. Besides the lighthouses—there are two—we found coastguards' houses, lifeboat-house with the dwellings of the crew, a post office and telegraph station, some fishermen's cottages, and last, but certainly not least, the inevitable "public." To this last we went

in search of refreshment, which by this time we began to feel the want of. We found we could have some ham-rashers and some home-grown potatoes. "What! potatoes grown here," we said, somewhat amazed, and looking round for indications of anything like garden soil; "Where do they grow?" "Ower there i' them gardens," said the landlord, pointing to some rough railings a couple of hundred yards away. "What in the sand?" we asked, being still not satisfied. "Aye, and good uns they are," he replied.

As for drinkables we found we could have "Ommost onny mottle thing," (almost any mortal thing), and this turned out to be pretty nearly correct. We learnt some curious statistics as to the amount of liquor consumed on the "island," as the inhabitants persist in calling the Head, and the information was at first somewhat startling. The average sale per week during summer, we were told, was from 60 to 100 gallons of draught beer, 40 dozen of bottled beer, 30 or 40 dozen of soda-water, lemonade, &c., besides other things in no small quantities. "What is the population?" we asked, quite astounded at the quantities just mentioned. There were fourteen families, besides one or two single men; in all, 63 persons. Our surprise somewhat abated, however, when a little later on we saw a thirsty yachting party of twenty or so land, and make a descent on the hostelry.

"It's visitors as duz it," we began to quite understand.

After our refection we proceeded to explore the "island," the lighthouse, of course, being our first object—that is, the principal lighthouse, for the smaller one seemed of little account in the colony. The big tower appeared to be literally a house built upon sand, but it did not appear in the least likely to fall. It is surrounded by a paved courtyard kept scrupulously clean, as it needs to be, for all the rain falling on it is stored, and forms the only supply for drinking purposes available in the colony. Everything about the lighthouse was beautifully clean—one could have eaten his dinner, as the saying goes, off the steps. In the lantern the technical details regarding the light were explained to us, but it is to be feared we were rather intent on observing the fine view. North-east Lincolnshire, South-east Yorkshire, the Humber, the ocean, seemed all literally under our feet, and capable of being jumped into from the lantern.

We found when we had seen the lighthouse and its belongings we had seen about all. However, we made our way to the real "Head," some two or three hundred yards further on, and found it to be a beautifully-rounded stretch of sand. As we stood there, with our backs to the land and our faces to the sea, and enjoyed the delicious breeze, we tried

to fancy ourselves on some desolate uncivilised island somewhere in mid-ocean; but we had only to turn round to dispel the illusion, for at our backs was a huge board—or rather there were boards—with the words "Postal Telegraph Station" in Brobdignagian letters.

Of course we inquired for Ravenspurn, the seaport of bygone days, and we were pointed out the spot where the unfortunate town once stood—some mile or so out in the sea.

On our way back we begged one or two of our landlord's potatoes as a curiosity, and with the intention of trying them in somewhat richer soil. After a pleasant walk back—for the day was now much cooler and the breezes magnificent—we reached Easington, just in time to catch our postman-carrier and his conveyance. Patrington was reached without trouble, and at length we found ourselves once more back in Hull, tired but entirely satisfied with our day's outing.

A DAY'S RAMBLE IN HOLDERNESS.

Every one who has been much used to tramping about in remote country districts knows that he may chance now and then to come across adventurous explorers "doing" the district. On a fine August evening, for instance, an old gentleman with battered hat, ill-treated trousers, and fearfully dirty boots, may often be seen drawing up to the principal inn of some village or country town. He carries, perchance, a curious angular-looking satchel, and looks altogether as if he had "seen better days," as one old landlady is reported to have said of the late Professor Sedgwick. The old gentleman is a very great geologist, and has hardly got settled down when, perhaps, there come up to the same hostel Mr Linear, a Cambridge "undergrad," who is botanising; Mr Jones, the respectable linen-draper from the great town 20 or 30 miles away, who is an entomologist; and, finally, occasionally the Rev Prebendary Brassrubber, the great archæologist, though it must be noted that the last mentioned gentleman generally manages to find better

quarters at the hall or the rectory than the Red Lion can afford. They are all for the nonce out-of-door students, and are collecting "specimens" of one kind or another, or making investigations of some sort, which will be hereafter carefully studied by the fireside.

I must confess I never, in my wanderings, found a peripatetic student engaged in the same kind of investigations and specimen-collecting as myself. Yet why should not others do what I have done? I have for years gone, during my summer holiday, into the villages and country towns of Yorkshire, with the view of informing myself concerning the dialects spoken in the various districts. I have found the occupation delightful and able to yield good results. My tools are simply a notebook and pencil, being all I require. I get the fresh air, and the pleasant country, and the scenery quite as much as the practical botanist or geologist. It seems to me that if England were carefully tramped over by different students, and notes carefully taken, the value to the philological world would be not slight. At any rate, I commend the idea to the consideration of all who are interested in such studies. Holderness has been my favourite district, and there are few parts of it in which I have not been over and over again; and of course I have not confined my observations to the dialect alone, but have kept open my eyes and

ear for other things. A short sketch of one day's tramp may not be amiss, as shewing the kind of thing I am accustomed to meet with. I must first premise that this particular tramp was undertaken to clear up a single point in connection with the Holderness' dialect. I had carefully "worked" the same route before

I left Hull by the earliest train, and took my ticket for Marton (otherwise Burton Constable) station. Sutton is too well known to Hull readers to need comment. The fine church of Swine, seen from the train, is always an object of interest to me as I pass. Many people who pass the village on their way to Hornsea are unaware that Swine has figured more in olden times than perhaps it does now, though many, of course, are quite aware of it. It formerly had a very considerable Cistercian nunnery, which dated back, I believe, as far as Stephen's reign. It is certain, too, that there was a Roman encampment here, and traces of it are even yet not altogether wanting. It was here that, in 1826, the great find of Roman coins took place—a circumstance still remembered by a few Holderness people.

Passing Skirlaugh station—which by the way is a long way from the Skirlaughs themselves—we were soon at Marton, where I left the train and took to the road. I wanted to be at Sproatley really, but I had gone thus far out of my way in order to enjoy the walk through the fine park at Burton Constable. Of

this fine old park and mansion I will not say much, as they are probably known to many who will read these lines. I had made an engagement with a friend, who met me at the entrance to the park and conducted me over both house and grounds. There was no one at that time living in the house, except one or two people in the shape of caretakers. The trees were grand, the lake looked splendid in the morning sun, and deer seemed as plentiful as sheep on a mountain side. There was the huge skeleton of the whale — minus some of the bones, I observed—which was caught on the Holderness coast several years ago. The whitened bones propped up on irons amidst the trees looked, I thought, a little hideous.

Soon after leaving the park Sproatley was reached, to my no small satisfaction, as the early walk had greatly quickened my appetite. However, I was able to obtain a good breakfast at one of the inns before the Aldborough coach, or "bus" as it was called, drove up. It was an extra one put on for some special occasion that day, and I had no hesitation in taking a place in it, although I had intended walking to Aldborough. The road was dusty and uninteresting—only one little hamlet is passed on the road, viz., Flinton—and the 'bus was crowded, and consequently hot, and I was not sorry when I was set down at the commencement of the main street of the village—or town, perhaps I had better

say. The fact is, it is difficult to know what to call the little, interesting old place, but a little compliment can do no harm. But, at any rate, Aldborough is interesting to any one who cares for the past history of his country. It is undoubtedly a very old town indeed, the very name indicating as much; the meaning being, of course, *old town*, or more properly *old fortified place*. The name was given doubtless by the Saxons, and shows that even then the place was of ancient date. The fact is that there had doubtless been a camp there in the Roman times, and a Saxon castle was built probably on the very same site. There is, or was, a curious stone (supposed to be of Danish origin) preserved in the churchyard recording the fact that this stronghold was built by one Ulf, who was lord of the place. As far as I could hear, there is no trace whatever left of the old Saxon fortress. In olden times Aldborough must have been a rather important place; it is now, if the truth be told, just a little—well, sleepy. An intelligent young tradesman I conversed with "Didn't see at all" why Aldborough shouldn't become another Withernsea, or even Hornsea, if they "had line" (the railway) there. I didn't see it either. But there was one little drawback—the place is just a little too far from the sea. But, after all, the greatest drawback, I couldn't help thinking, is to be found in the fact that the "line" *isn't* there.

On the way from Aldborough to Hornsea, a walk of some half-dozen miles or so, one passes near Bewick Hall. It is now only a farmhouse, as so many other "halls" in Holderness are. I believe Holderness is quite unique in the possession of so many farmhouse "halls." Where are the squires who once lived in these fine old mansions? Some of the "halls" would not disgrace any squire, and indeed many squires in Wales, for instance, cannot boast of "halls" at all equalling some of these old mansions, inhabited (and often owned) by Holderness farmers. A whole host of these halls can be found scattered up and down the district—Nuttle's Hall, Danthorpe Hall, Fitling Hall, Bewick Hall, Camerton Hall, and numbers more, being found in a few miles square. The road leaves the two hamlets of Cowden or Colden to the right, and the first village met with is Mappleton. The church and churchyard are so beautifully kept that they are a treat to see, even from the road; and I had no time to go inside either the one or the other, although I heard there had once been some great man buried there, whom I could not determine.

Passing the hamlet of Rowlston—which, by-the-by, seems of remarkably limited extent, being apparently confined to a couple or so of houses by the roadside—I came in sight of the railway again and knew I was at Hornsea. To Hull people any

information about Hornsea would be quite superfluous. Everybody knows the look of it, knows its lake or "mar," knows that the said mar covers an area of some four or five hundred acres, being thus the largest lake in all Yorkshire. Every one knows, too, that the adjoining village or hamlet of Hornsea Beck was, some years ago, washed away. The truth is Hornsea is somewhat hackneyed, and as I did not stay on this occasion longer than to get some dinner I will say no more about it.

Atwick was the next village I made for. Here I had a long conversation with an old fellow who was breaking stones on the roadside, on the subject of the sea ravages in that district. Of all the Holderness coast this part of it (and downwards past Hornsea and Mappleton) seems to suffer most—though further south, in the neighbourhood of Tunstall, Kilnsea, &c., it is very nearly as bad. I had intended making a few remarks of my own—founded on notes and observations I have made at different times—on the remarkable effects of the sea on the Holderness coast, but I have been forestalled by the Rev F. O. Morris, of Nunburnholme, the well-known writer. In a most interesting paper (in the *Leisure Hour* for September, 1877), he gives a very clear and full account, which I could not hope to approach. I will, therefore, content myself with quoting some little from his paper. It appears, then, that at Atwick there

was on one occasion a loss of thirty-one yards of coast in nine years, whilst Atwick Cross is 150 yards nearer the cliff than it was in 1786. At Mappleton the "sea gained eight and a half yards in about two years, and at this same rate would be up to the church in 146 years." Between 1786 and 1871 the total distance gained by the sea was about 176 yards. I have myself seen in one year, near the village of Tunstall, a mass of cliff, four yards wide by fifty long, disappear. The most astonishing recorded loss seems to have been at Kilnsea, where, in one year, "as much as sixteen yards were washed away." The general average encroachment by the sea seems to be about two yards. Mr Morris is undoubtedly right when he says that it seems to him "a much more pressing question than that which has been raised in the country and in Parliament as to how long our coal measure may be calculated to last;" and one cannot help admitting the truth of Mr Morris's assertion that "'*Fuit Ilium et ingens gloria*' will be the future motto of what was once the site of old England."

Leaving Atwick and its "Cross," and the old stonebreaker, I steered my course towards Skipsea. Skirlington Hill, or "Skeleton" Hill, as the rustics prefer to call it, is passed on the way, but it is not much when it *is* seen, like most of the so-called hills in Holderness. There is another hill at Skipsea, this time called the Castle Hill. The name

indicates that there was formerly a castle there, and Skipsea Castle was, in fact, built by the same Fleming, Drogo (or Drugo) De Bruere, who was one of William the Norman's followers, and who had married William's niece. He was the first lord-paramount or seigneur of Holderness. Of the old castle the traces remaining are very few. It is a pity that Holderness has not managed to preserve more of its old buildings. With former abbeys or priories at Swine, Nunkeeling, Meaux, and Birstall; with castles at Burstwick and Skipsea; with the old Saxon fort at Aldborough; with the undoubted old Roman stations at Patrington, Swine, Beverley, &c., it does seem strange that Holderness can now show so little in the way of remains.

By this time I was beginning to feel a little tired. I had started in the morning quite uncertain, and quite careless also, be it said, how far I should get before nightfall. Remembering now, however, that I had a friend at Beeford, who had given me *carte blanche*, so to speak, in the way of availing myself of the shelter of his hospitable roof, I turned away from the coast and made towards that village. By the time I had reached the commencement of the village I was fairly footsore, and no wonder, as I had walked some twenty miles along a dusty road on a hot August day. As my friend lived towards the other end of Beeford, however, I

had to trudge on for some distance yet, Beeford being a village of no ordinary length. It is said to be just a mile long, and I can quite believe it. It always reminds me of another long drawn out village—"Long" Addingham, in the West Riding, near Ilkley.

I have said nothing in the way of what I noted concerning the Holderness dialect, but it must be understood that I talked with every rustic I could meet with—the more rustic the better for my purpose; and not a few pages of my note-book still testify to what I did actually pick up in that one day's ramble.

A FEW OF THE MORE NOTEWORTHY VILLAGES.

It seems necessary, or at least advisable, to add a few short notes anent some of the more important or more interesting places in the wapentake which have not been hitherto mentioned in these notes, or, at any rate, only just mentioned. And in more than one way Roos has claims to be first dealt with.

Roos took its name from one Peter de Ros, who lived in the time of the first Henry. This Peter de Ros was the owner of the whole village, and was the ancestor of the Lords de Ros, who were once lords of the seigniory. The Barony of Ros, or Roos, is the oldest existing English peerage, having been created as far back as 1264. Roos is one of the most extensive (*i.e.*, populous) villages in southern Holderness, and it is also one of the most pleasantly situated. The entrance to the village from the "carrs" is anything but bad, there being plenty of trees about—a rather rare feature in some parts of Holderness.

Halsham.—Not far from Roos is the scattered village of Halsham. So scattered, indeed, are the

houses that it is rarely one meets with two or three together. Opinion seems to be divided as to which is the "main part of the village," whether about the church or around the blacksmith's shop. The Clifford Constables till lately owned all the land hereabouts, and the family mausoleum stands on a gently rising ground near the church. The church itself is an ancient building, with a side chapel which seems to have formerly been a chantry.

Burton Pidsea.—A native of this place boasted that from his parish was to be obtained one of the finest and most extensive views in all Holderness, and he was probably not far wrong. The village stands at a good elevation, and commands a very nice view indeed of the surrounding (and for the most part less elevated) country. Near here is the famous Ridgmount—always called Regiment locally—known through all Holderness as being one of the handsomest farm mansions in the district. Passing near the old wall at *Danthorpe* one may comfortably walk under the hour to *Humbleton*. This is a very extensive parish, and comprises I don't know how many townships—Danthorpe, Fitling, Elstronwick, and so forth. I am told there is a very fine painting (as an altar-piece) in the church here, though I have not seen it myself. It is an oil-painting after Raphael on the Transfiguration, and seems, as far as I can hear, to have been presented by some lady. A very cross-country route of a few miles brings us

to *Withernwick*, about which I need not say much, and, crossing the Hull and Hornsea Railway, to Rise.

Rise is but a small village, but is noteworthy as being the seat of the Bethel family—one of the very few seats of the gentry which Holderness possesses. To the lover of woodland Rise has charms which but few parts of the seigniory can vie with, for, as has been observed before, Holderness is, as a rule, woefully destitute of trees. Rise, however, possesses many scores of acres of fine woodland. We read that the parish once possessed two chantries, dedicated respectively to St. Mary and St. Thomas.

There is hereabouts a regular circle of villages, with Catwick for centre, and Rise, Long Riston, Routh, Leven, Brandesburton, and Sigglesthorne forming the circumference. This circle thus takes in several of the most thriving and important villages of the whole wapentake—not reckoning market towns, of course. A few words may be said about each of them, in the order given above. Rise has been already mentioned.

Long Riston, a couple of miles or so from Rise, is, in some respects, a pleasant village, being tolerably elevated. Some distance from the village, on the road to Leven, stands the chief residence, Riston Grange. Some little distance away stands the village of

Routh, which is a long straggling place on the

road from Beverley to Hornsea. The village is of small extent—that is as regards population, for it apparently covers ground enough for a large-sized town.

Leven is one of the most thriving villages in Holderness, I should say. It is of considerable extent, and seems prosperous. It is situated at the crossing point of two good roads, one running east and west, the other north and south. Here the petty sessions are held for the surrounding district, and the "lock-up" is pointed out to all visitors with an evident feeling of superiority on the part of the inhabitants, it being considered somewhat of an honour to the place to possess this institution.

Brandesburton is one of the many "burtons" East Yorkshire possesses. The word "burton" comes from two Anglo-Saxon words, meaning literally *bearton*, that is, the enclosure where the *bear* or *crop* was stored up — in plain language, the *stackyard*. There are (notes Mr Isaac Taylor) sixty villages in England called Burton, or, which is the same thing, Barton, and all of these must at first have been simply outlying rickyards. The neighbourhood of Brandesburton is specially interesting from a geological point of view. In the period known to geologists as the glacial period it is certain that what is now Holderness was part of the bed of the ocean, and the mounds of sand and

gravel so numerous about Brandesburton were formed by the tremendous rolling action of the sea which once covered the spot. The greatest of these sea-formed elevations is the well-known Brandesburton "Barf," a more or less curve-shaped ridge. I believe a good deal of the land is, or was, owned by the Emmanuel Hospital foundation in London.

Sigglesthorne is some three or four miles from Hornsea, being some distance from the opposite extremity of the Hornsea Mere. Nearly all the place names hereabouts show how much water and waste land there formerly was in the neighbourhood. We have in the Mere itself, and in the names of Hornsea, Seaton, Catwick, Catfoss, &c., proof of the plentifulness of water; whilst such names as Great Wassand, Sandfield, Sigglesthorne, are indications as to the former condition of the land there was. The old church at Sigglesthorne, with its square tower, is well worth a visit. This village is one of the few Holderness parishes possessing anything like a decent endowment for educational purposes. A very pleasant evening's walk may be made from Hornsea to Sigglesthorne and back, by taking the road to the north of the lake one way, and that to the south in the other half of the journey. Not far from the River Hull—here very small indeed—is *North Frodingham*. It is a considerably larger and more important place than its namesake South Frodingham, near Withern.

sea. Indeed, this northern village boasts of once having been a market town, though how long this is ago no one seemed certain about. *Foston*, generally called *Foston-on-the-Wolds*, is not more than a mile or two from Brandesburton in a straight line, though it seems a good deal more by the road. Foston takes it name from its "foss" or "beck," which I believe is a tributary of the Hull. *Barmston* is the most northern of the Holderness villages. It is one of the pleasantest villages, too, in the whole district, being nicely situated near the sea, and not on such a dead level as some of the places further south. It had formerly a fine old hall, surrounded by a moat; indeed, it still has the hall, but it is, I believe, used as a farmhouse, like many another "hall" in Holderness. Near Barmston the well-known Barmston Drain empties itself into the sea; it is one of those very large artificial or semi-artificial cuttings which have done so much for Holderness. The livings of Barmston and Beeford (a little further south) are amongst the best in East Yorkshire.

Tickton, near Beverley, with its extension at Hull Bridge, seems to deserve a line of mention. Quite an important and busy community has sprung up about this Hull Bridge, on the Beverley and Hornsea road. Bone crushing seems to be a speciality.

Waghen, or Wawne, as more commonly spelt and

pronounced, is a scattered, straggling village of small population, like Halsham, Routh, and numbers of other villages to be found in our district. It is, however, interesting, as containing the relics of Meaux (or Melsa) Abbey.

Withernsea.—One hardly knows whether to call this a village or a town. "Diz tha call Pathrinton a toon?" was asked by one of the Withernsea donkey boys of a young excursionist from Patrington, "Why, hey, of cooarse Ah deea," was the reply. "Why then Ah sall call Withernsea a toon, for its as big as Pathrinton, all oot," was the dogmatic resolve of the donkey-driver. One thing is certain, viz., that "Afoor railrooad was made Withernsea was nowt." What it will become we cannot say, but one would fain hope that it may develop into a prosperous watering-place of at least moderate size.

As has before been said, Holderness contains, properly speaking, no large towns, for the towns of Hull, Beverley, Driffield, and Bridlington can hardly be considered nowadays as belonging to Holderness proper, though they all lie close to the borders of the wapentake; in fact, portions of the boroughs of Hull and Beverley are actually within the district, but the great bulk of each is outside the limits of Holderness. Thus the chief places in the seigniory itself are Hedon, Patrington, Withernsea, Hornsea, Aldborough, all of which have been previously alluded to.

APPENDIX.

Additional words selected from the Holderness Glossary :—

In Notes on the Dialect I gave a few words from the speech of the Holderness man, with short notes on each word. As the vocabulary of the Holdernessian is very extensive—containing, as I have said, some thousands of words—it is evident that the selection made was but the lightest possible skimming, so to speak. Hundreds of words peculiar in themselves, of curious derivation, and particular force or energy, or otherwise interesting, remain behind, and I propose to select a very few more of those which seem most to deserve notice.

Ansel.—This word is common in the northern and western parts of Holderness, but seems little known in the south-east. As a noun the word signifies the first money taken by a tradesman; as a verb it means to use an article for the first time, as "Ah sal *ansel* mi new bonnet o' Sunday." Under the spelling "hansel" Halliwell, in his "Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Terms," before mentioned, gives a long and very interesting note on this word. It appears to be known in several other districts of England.

Beald, a sheltered place for cattle, also common in north and west Holderness, is from the Anglo-Saxon, and is frequently used in old ballads—

> And *bealed* himself with a tree (*i. e.*, sheltered himself).
> —"*Felon Leire of Rokeby.*"

And Halliwell quotes from the Lincoln MS.—

> For thou myghte in thaire bale, best be thaire belde (*i.e.*, best to be their shelter or protection in their sorrow).

This once common word seems now to survive only in a few districts of the North of England.

Bowdekite.—This is a peculiarly expressive term; it is applied to a saucy, mischievous child, and likewise sometimes to a person of short stature. There is no exact equivalent in ordinary English. The nearest approach to it is the word rogue, when used with affectionate good humour. "Thoo lahtle bowdekite, thoo's putten a button inti key-hooal, an noo we can't oppen deear."

Chequers (pebbles).—"Pebbles were formerly used in reckonings or computations on *chequered* or *checkered* tables." We have also the verb to *check* in accounts, and that department which looks after the country's accounts is still called the Board of *Exchequer*. Again, where we now use pegs in the game of merrils, or nine men's morrice, our forefathers used pebbles, or *checkers*, and the movements on the board were made so as to *check* the advance of those on the opposite side. Small-sized lumps of coal are still called in Holderness *checkery bits*.

Childre, or childhre, as it is always pronounced (children), is not, as many ignorant despisers of a dialect they know nothing about have imagined, a bit of bad or degraded English. The fact is, it is the true old plural. Our modern plural *children* is a double plural, and is really as absurd as *swines* or *oxens* would be.

> They are like unto childir that rynnes aftere buttyrflyes.
> *Hampole's Prose Treatises.*

Childermas was the ancient name of Innocents' Day.

Grave.—The common Holderness word for dig, when ordinary turning up of the ground for the purposes of

cultivation is meant. The Holderness word dig almost always means to use a "dig," that is, a pickaxe. *Grave* is, of course, the common English form appearing in grave, graven, engraven, &c. "Hez tha getten thy garden *graved* yet?" a man will ask a neighbour.

Gowpanful, a handful, is connected with the Icelandic word *gaupn*, which denotes the hands held together in a bowl-like form. We have also the word *gowp*, meaning to hollow out or scoop.

Hoave.—Besides the common meaning of this word, viz., an intimation to a horse to bear to the left, there is another common in Holderness. It means to walk blunderingly or stupidly, as "Giles *hoav'd* inti wrang shop, an Roger *hoav'd* efther him." The Welsh *hofio*, to hover, is given as the derivation of this word, and, of course, the English word hover is derived from the same.

Kensback, or *Kenspeckle* is a useful word. It has the meaning of "recognisable by some striking feature or peculiarity," as a crooked nose or hump-back. "His varry *kenspeckle*, ah knaw, bud somehoo ah didn't knaw him at fost."

Lin, or *Line*.—This is another instance where a dialect keeps the true old form, whilst literary English has adopted a different one. The Anglo-Saxon word for flax was *lin*, and this (line) is still the word in our district. The modern English linen is really an adjective, like wooden, golden, &c.

Main, very, exceedingly, as "*main* glad," very glad indeed. It is related that when "Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was intriguing for the usurpation of the crown, he brought up from Middleham, in Yorkshire, a troop of burly yeomen, his tenants, with whom he had conversed when at Middleham, on the most familiar

terms. This troop was drawn up in Finsbury Fields, and Richard was present, when one of the yeomen soldiers went up to him, and, clapping him on the shoulder, said, 'Dicken, Dicken, ah's *main* blythe thoo's boon ti be king.'"

Pinchgut.—An expressive, though not particularly refined, term for a grasping, miserly fellow; especially one who stints his family or servants in food.

Pity.—This word has the old-fashioned use, "he is to *pity*"—that is, to be pitied. Compare our "he is to blame," "a house to let," in modern English.

Recklin.—Originally this word seems to have been applied to the supernumerary of a litter of pigs, for whom there is not a teat; but as this particular pig would obviously be the weakest and puniest of all the litter, the word came to be applied to the smallest and weakest pig, whether supernumerary or not. The transition to a poor, diminutive child was easy, and the term *recklin* is now often used to denote the puniest or most "ill-throoven" child of a family.

Simmon.—This word was formerly well known about Beverley. *Simmon* was "pounded brick or tiles, used by bricklayers for colouring mortar." Simmon-beating was once the hard-labour punishment in Beverley Borough Gaol. A ghost called "Awd Simmon-beeather" (old Simmon-beater) was supposed to haunt the gaol, and this often frightened the prisoners more than the hard labour.

Smopple, or *smoppled.*—A curious word, with the same force as brittle, liable to snap easily. It is used in other districts of the north, but its derivation seems a puzzle.

Staithe, a landing stage or jetty for barges.—Common enough in York, Hull, &c.; it is also known in Norfolk. An old advertisement in a Hull newspaper seems to have first brought this word under the notice of Mr Halliwell.

I venture to quote the advertisement (from Halliwell's Dictionary) as interesting, possibly, to Hull readers:—"Persons desirous of contracting with the Hull Corporation for the construction of a timber *landing staith* at the Ferryboat Dock at Hull, and other works connected therewith, and for removing the old breakwater jetty there, must send their tenders, marked 'Tender for *landing staith*,' to the Town Clerk, Town Hall, Hull, on or before noon, on the 6th day of July next" (1846).

Steck, to fasten a gate or door.—The Holderness Glossary corrects the error which most glossarists have fallen into, viz., that of rendering the word as "to shut." The old mode of fastening a door or gate was by means of a *stake*, hence to steck the door is simply to *stake* it; so that to steck should be defined as to fasten, and not to shut.

> And our door has no *steckle* (no fastener).
> "*Poor Peebles*," an old Scotch ballad, attributed to King James I. (of Scotland).

Stee, a ladder, a very common word in Yorkshire generally. The root is the Anglo-Saxon *stigan*, to ascend and Mr Skeat, the well-known English scholar, notes that "*stairs*, and stile, in a pathway, have the same origin; as also *stirrup*, originally *sty-rope*. A.S. *stigrap*."

Swinkin, an adjective meaning laborious, toilsome, from the A.S. *swincan*, to labour. "We've deean a *swinkin* lot o' work tiday." The word is common in early writers, Chaucer, for instance, using it very frequently. And in Piers the Plowman (Passus vi. 26) we have

> Bi seynt Poule, quod Perkyn, ye profre you so faire, that I shal *swynke* and swete, and sowe for us bothe.

Temse or *Tempse*, a fine sieve, or small strainer, is still known in north-west Holderness. It is an ancient agricultural term, and Halliwell has also *Temsing chamber*

(sifting-room), and "*Tems-Loaf*, bread made of sifted or fine flour." Tusser, in his "Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie" (written some 300 years ago), uses this latter term.

Wash, to wash, is probably much nearer the original Anglo-Saxon, *wacscan*, than our standard English word. From the Northumberland Household Book (Leckonfield, Beverley, *circa* 1,500) we have the quotation, "Two *weshynge* towels for my lorde to *wesch* with."

Yakkeyahs, a funny term for the "Esquimaux and the inhabitants of the Polar regions generally." These, of course, would be known to Holdernessians through the Hull whalers.

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